JOE GOLEM™ OCCULT DETECTIVE

THE CONJURORS

by MIKE MIGNOLA
CHRISTOPHER GOLDEN
PETER BERGTING
MICHELLE MADSEN

SIMON CHURCH

is fading fast in the city above and Molly is held captive by Dr. Cocteau's gas-men below, but something stirs in the tunnels. How much of the golem is still in the man, or the man in the golem? And can either be enough to stop Dr. Cocteau once he has the artifact he seeks?

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JOE GOLEM: OCCULT DETECTIVE VOLUME 4—THE CONJURORS

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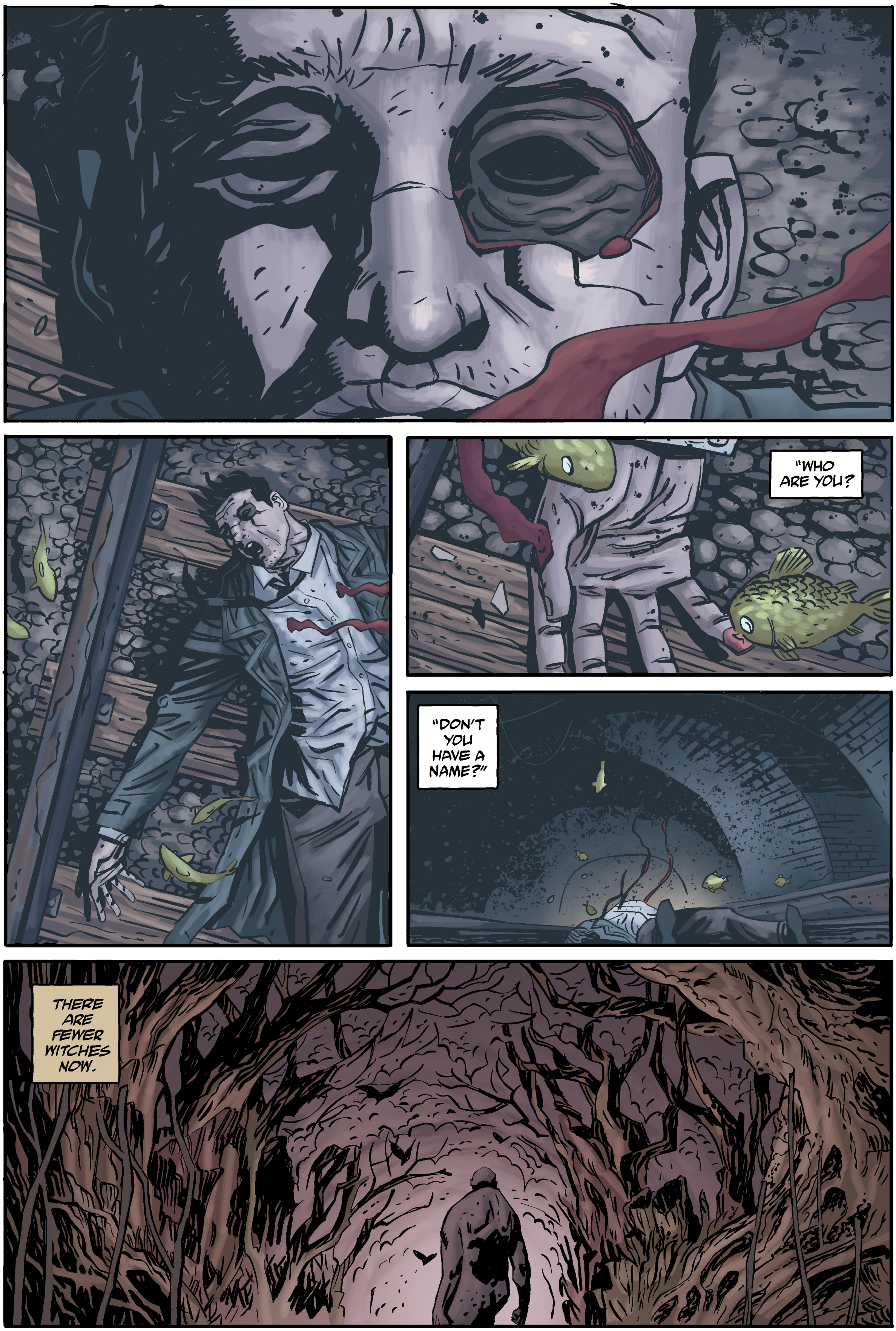
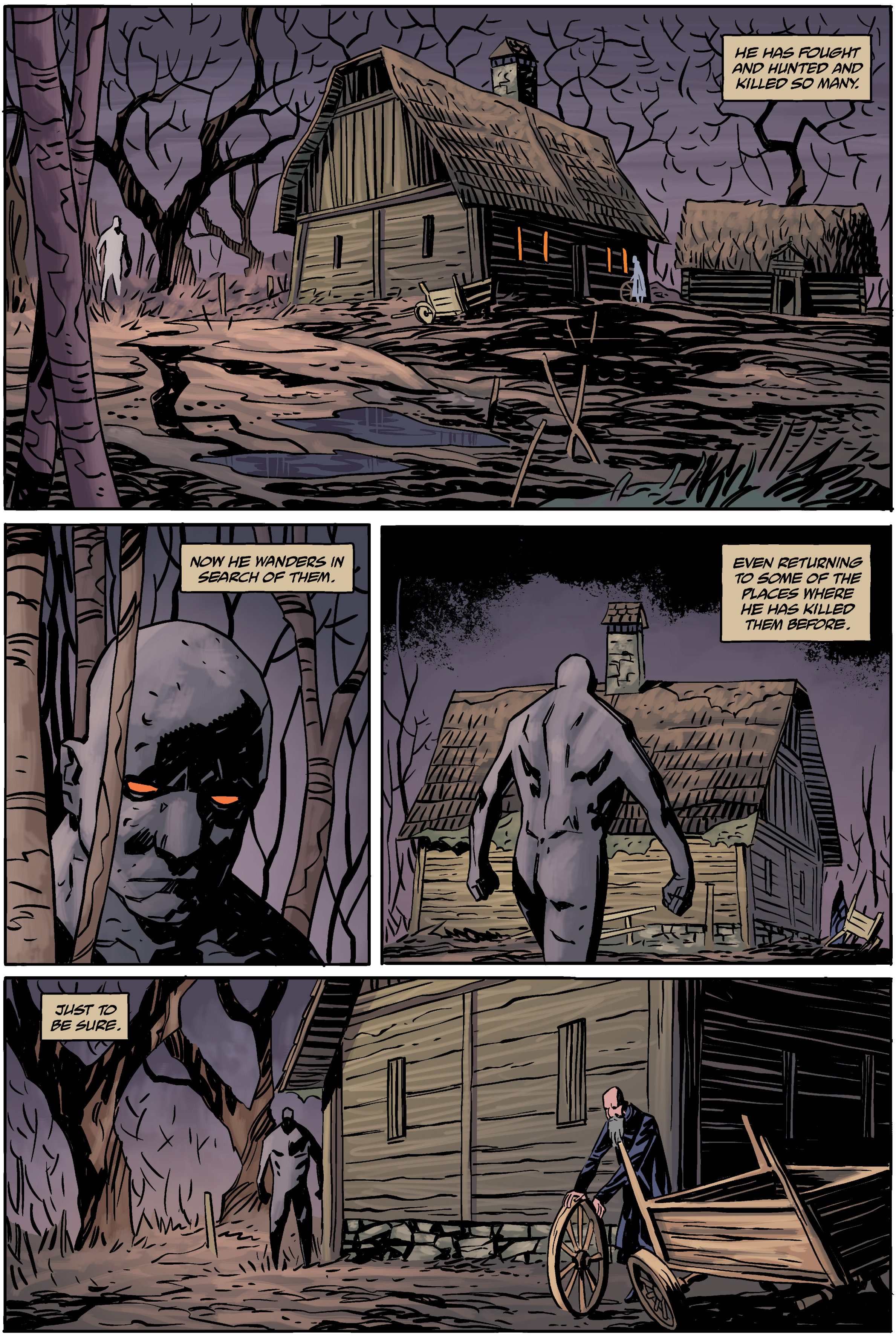
THE CONJURORS

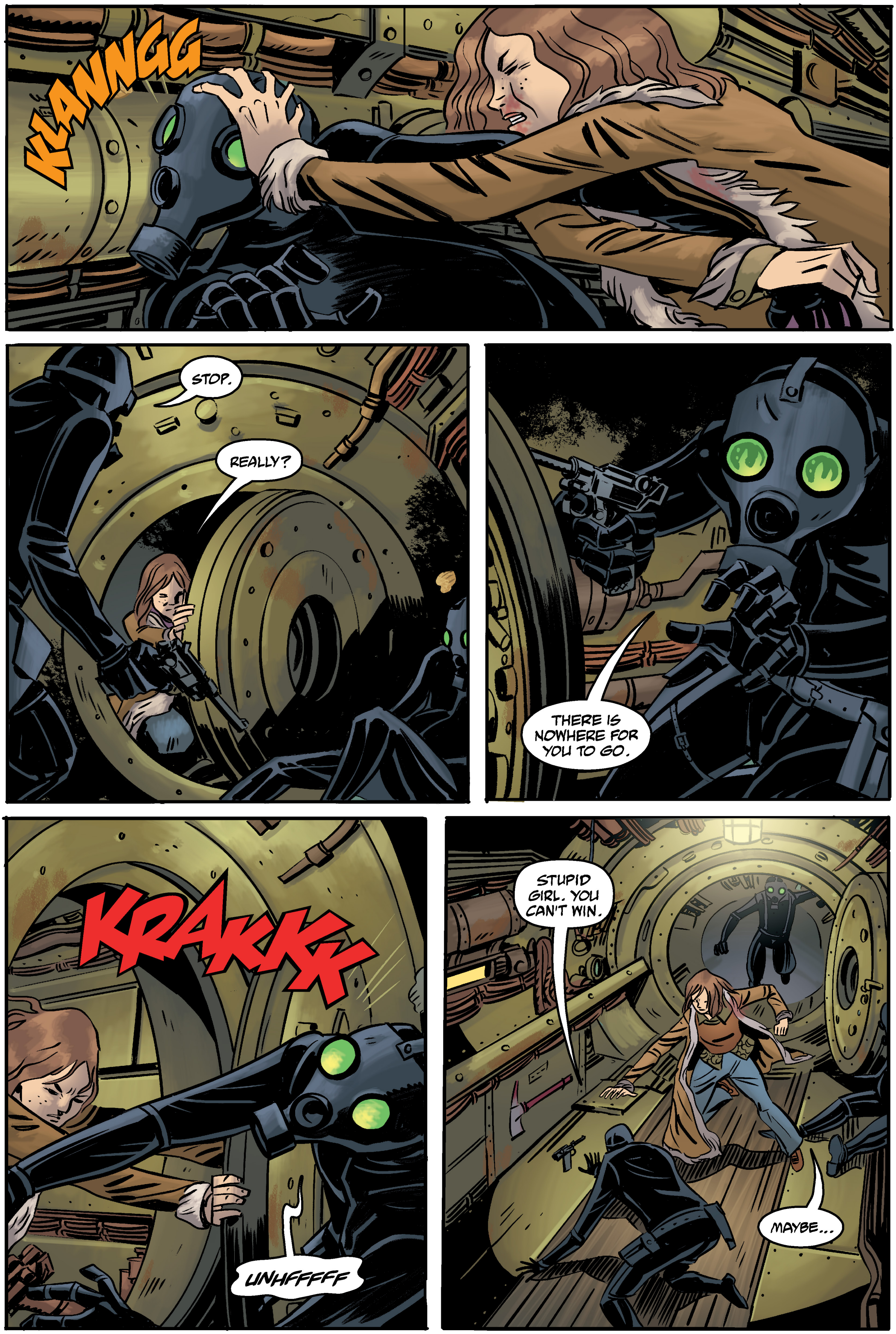
Part 1


"WHO ARE YOU?
"DON'T YOU HAVE A NAME?"
THERE ARE FEWER WITCHES NOW.

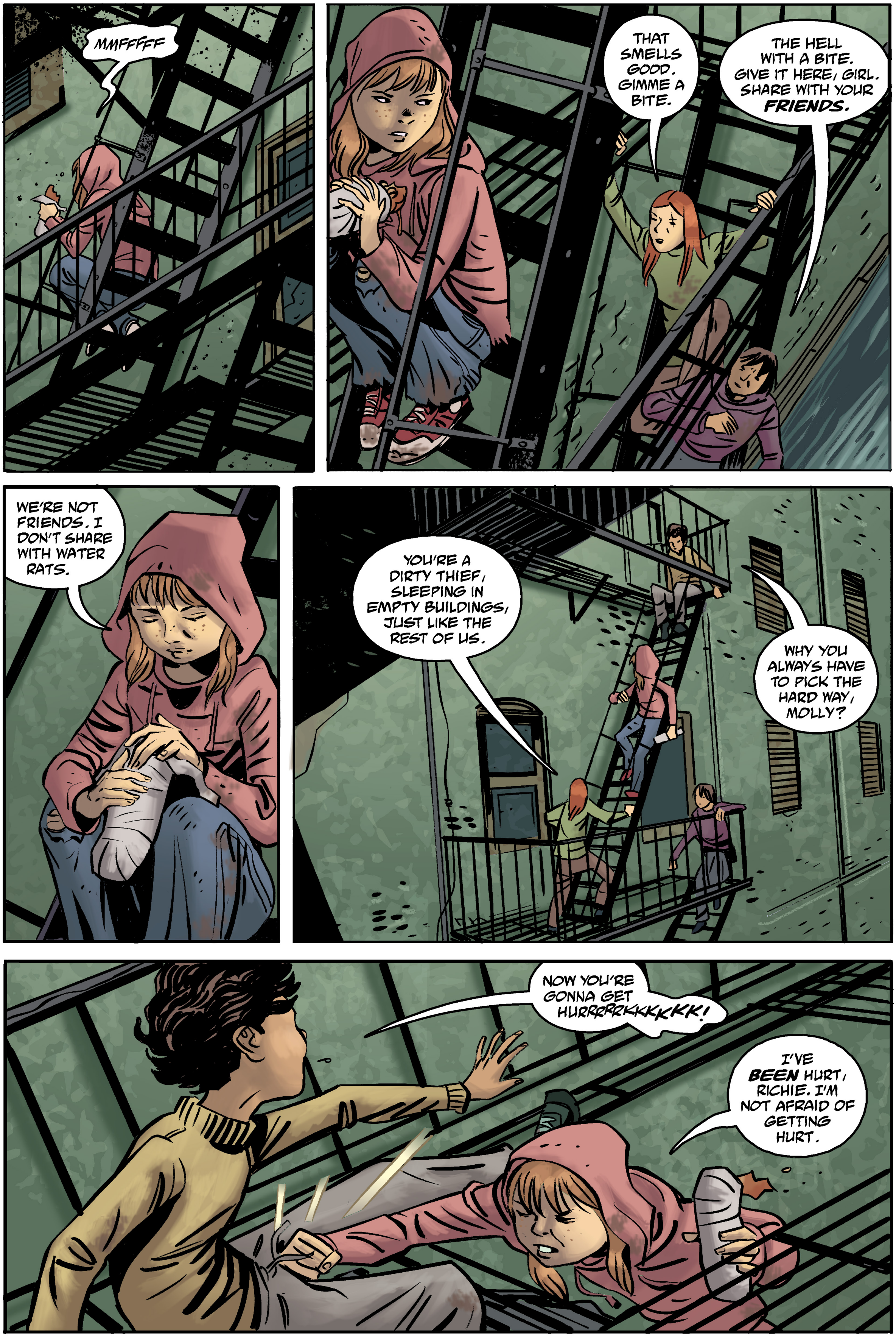

HE HAS FOUGHT AND HUNTED AND KILLED SO MANY.
NOW HE WANDERS IN SEARCH OF THEM.
EVEN RETURNING TO SOME OF THE PLACES WHERE HE HAS KILLED THEM BEFORE.
JUST TO BE SURE.

HHUNFFF... DAMN IT.
HE KILLED THE WITCHES RIGHT HERE. THEIR SCENT REMAINS, AND HE WONDERS.
WELL...
ARE YOU JUST GOING TO STAND THERE...
...OR ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL?

BENEATH LOWER MANHATTAN.
PLEASE DON'T HURT ME. I'M JUST A KID!
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO YOU--
--YET!
UNFFFFH


KLANNGG
STOP.
REALLY?
THERE IS NOWHERE FOR YOU TO GO.
KRAKKK
UNHFFFFF
STUPID GIRL. YOU CAN'T WIN.
MAYBE...

"BUT I CAN FIGHT."
THE DROWNING CITY. 1971.
LAST TIME MY MEATBALL SUB ONLY HAD FIVE MEAT-BALLS, AND THERE ARE SUPPOSED TO BE SIX. SO THIS TIME MAYBE DON'T RIP ME OFF.
WAFFLES
HEY, KID!
YOU DON'T WANT TO EAT THAT CRAP. TAKE THIS INSTEAD. THE BEST YOU'LL EVER TASTE.


MMFFFFF
THAT SMELLS GOOD. GIMME A BITE.
THE HELL WITH A BITE. GIVE IT HERE, GIRL. SHARE WITH YOUR **FRIENDS.**
WE'RE NOT FRIENDS. I DON'T SHARE WITH WATER RATS.
YOU'RE A DIRTY THIEF, SLEEPING IN EMPTY BUILDINGS, JUST LIKE THE REST OF US.
WHY YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO PICK THE HARD WAY, MOLLY?
NOW YOU'RE GONNA GET HURRRRRKKKKKK!
I'VE **BEEN** HURT, RICHIE. I'M NOT AFRAID OF GETTING HURT.

NO!
WHAKK
FWWOOOSSH
AAAIEEEE!
OH, CRAP...
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
UNNGGHHH!
WHANNGG

THAT'S ENOUGH, NOW. THERE'S NOWHERE TO RUN.
I'VE NEVER **HAD** ANYWHERE TO RUN, ASSHOLE. I JUST TRY TO SURVIVE, AND TAKE CARE OF MY FRIENDS. BUT YOU GUYS TOOK FELIX, AND NOW YOU TRIED TO MURDER JOE!
I'M ALL OUT OF FRIENDS.
BLAM
PLINK
HUNNHH
NO!
HHSSSSSSS
SSSSTTOP.
UNNHH

ELSEWHERE.
THE HOME OF SIMON CHURCH.
TEA'S NOT GOING TO...UNNHH... DO IT TONIGHT, APPARENTLY. NO MATTER WHAT I SPRINKLE INTO IT.
WHISKEY IT IS, THEN.
SSSHHHHHHHHH
THUNKK
UNGGHHH... DAMN IT.
SHRAKK
ZZTTT

MADNESS. THE SURGE OF OCCULT ENERGY IN THE CITY...LIKE NOTHING I'VE EVER SEEN.
JUST SHOW ME JOE. THE REST DOESN'T MATTER.
KREKK
SHOW ME JOE, DAMN IT!
NO. THAT'S NOT RIGHT. THAT'S THIS BUILDING...
PLEASE, JOE. COME HOME.

KRAKKSSHH
AAAGGGHH!
THAT'S IT, THEN. NOTHING WORKS. EVERYTHING IS BROKEN.
...JOE?
OH, MY FRIEND... MY DEAREST FRIEND...I'M SO SORRY.
ARE YOU, SIMON?
TRULY?
HAWTHORNE?

THE FINAL SUNSET OF THE 15TH CENTURY.
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU SLEEP...?
NEITHER DO I. BUT I GO QUIET SOME-TIMES. IT IS RESTFUL.
THEN I'LL MAKE YOU UP A PLACE IN THE BARN FOR AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO STAY WITH US.
YOU SEE, CRINA? I'VE TOLD YOU, HE'S KIND. YOU MUST NOT JUDGE BY WHAT YOU SEE ON THE OUTSIDE. MANY MONSTERS WEAR PRETTY FACES.
BUT SOME ARE UGLY, GRANDFATHER. MOST OF THE WITCHES WERE UGLY.
MOST OF THEM, LITTLE ONE. BUT NOT ALL. AND DON'T BELIEVE YOUR GRANDFATHER...
"...I AM NOT KIND."

HOOO HOOO
HOOOOOOOO
CRREEEEAAKK

HELLO. IT'S ME, CRINA. ARE YOU SLEEPING?

WHAT DO YOU WANT, LITTLE ONE?
I COULDN'T SLEEP FROM WONDERING. I KNOW YOU ARE THE GOLEM, BUT **WHO** ARE YOU?
DO YOU HAVE A NAME?

DR. NIGEL HAWTHORNE. THOMAS CRANHAM. SAMUEL "DOVE" THRIFT. ARTHUR KENNEALLY. JUST SOME OF THE MEN WHO HAVE AIDED THE GREAT DETECTIVE OVER HIS MANY LONG YEARS.
OH, MY DEAR OLD FRIENDS. I KNOW WHY YOU'VE COME...
UNFFF...BOTH BLOOD AND OIL RUN COLD IN ME TONIGHT.
BUT THERE IS SOME-THING I MUST DO.
PRRKKKK
CLANK
CLANK
FOR YOUR OWN SAKE, SIMON...LET IT END.
WE'VE ALL SUFFERED FOR YOU. I WAS MERELY THE FIRST "FRIEND."
WE ALL **DIED** FOR YOU, MR. CHURCH.
"OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE NIGHT SPRING-HEEL'D JACK DROWNED ME IN THE THAMES MERELY TO MAKE YOU ANGRY? HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW MY NAME."
I HAVEN'T... UNFFF...FORGOTTEN, ARTHUR. I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THE SACRIFICES ANY OF MY FRIENDS HAVE MADE IN ORDER TO FIGHT THE DARKNESS BY MY SIDE.
AND I KNOW I AM DYING AT LAST. ALL THE OCCULT MECHANISMS I'VE INSTALLED CAN'T KEEP ME ALIVE FOREVER. BUT YOU **MUST** UNDERSTAND...

WHAT OF THIS, SIMON? DO YOU REMEMBER THE PASHA'S OPAL? MANY OF US DIED FOR YOUR WORK, BUT LESTER SALLOW LOST HIMSELF, BODY AND SOUL.
YOU'RE NOT LISTENING.
"NOT EVEN A GHOST REMAINS."
"HE KNEW THAT WHOEVER PERFORMED THE INVOCATION AND CARRIED THE OPAL IN HIS HAND, WRAPPED IN FRESH BAY LEAF, WOULD BE RENDERED INVISIBLE...
"...AND HE USED THAT KNOWLEDGE TO SAVE YOUR LIFE."
BRILLIANT, SALLOW! YOU'RE BRILLIANT! JUST KEEP HER BUSY ANOTHER MOMENT AND I--
"BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW EVERYTHING, DID HE?"

SALLOW?
OH, NO. YOU FOOL.
DID HE KNOW THAT IF HE LET GO OF THE OPAL WITHOUT THE PROPER INCANTATION, HE WOULD TRULY VANISH? NOTHING LEFT BUT THE MEMORY OF HIM?
I ASSURE YOU, HE KNEW THE RISKS. BUT HE WAS MY FRIEND. IF I COULD GIVE HIM THE GIFT OF ETERNAL REST HE EARNED, OF COURSE I WOULD!
BUT YOU CAN GIVE THAT GIFT TO JOE! YOU FEEL THE TEMPTATION TO BRING HIM BACK, BUT YOU MUST NOT! YOU CALL THIS MAN, THIS CREATURE, YOUR FRIEND.
BUT HE EARNED HIS HUMANITY IN A PREVIOUS LIFE, AND EARNED HIS SOUL'S REST! UNDER YOUR GUIDANCE HE HAS SACRIFICED THE ONE. DON'T TAKE THE OTHER FROM HIM!
KOFF KOFF
YOU SPEAK... HAWTHORNE...AS IF I HAVE A CHOICE. BUT THE THREAT...HNNFFF... THE THREAT IS NOT OVER. THE GIRL, MOLLY...IF SHE IS STILL ALIVE, SHE MUST HAVE HELP.
AND DR. COCTEAU...WHATEVER HE PLANS TO DO WITH FELIX ORLOV, THE CONJUROR...

"...DR. COCTEAU MUST BE STOPPED."
SO THIS IS JOY.
OH, MY FRIEND, IF ONLY YOU COULD UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE BECOMING, AND WHAT IT MEANS TO ME.
I WONDER IF YOU CAN FEEL IT. NOT YOUR TRUE NATURE...

BY NOW YOU CAN SEE YOURSELF QUITE WELL, I'M SURE.
BUT CAN YOU FEEL THE LONG TETHER THAT LINKS YOU TO THE OUTER DARK, TO THE OLD GODS AND THE WORLD BEFORE?
WE ARE ALL TETHERED TOGETHER BY THIS OCCULT THREAD. YOU AND I AND SIMON CHURCH...OH YES, THE DEAR OLD DETECTIVE HAS PLAYED HIS ROLE IN OUR DRAMA.
"I THINK I WAS NINE YEARS OLD THE NIGHT I FIRST SAW HIM. MY PARENTS AND THEIR FRIENDS HAD GATHERED TO WORSHIP THEIR GOD. THE GOD BEFORE GODS, THEY CALLED HIM.
"BUT EVEN HE...EVEN THE RED KING...HAD TO COME FROM SOMEWHERE. THOUGH ONLY NINE, ALREADY I WONDERED ABOUT SUCH THINGS. MY PARENTS PROMISED TO EXPLAIN IT ALL.
"BUT THAT NIGHT, SIMON CHURCH PAID THEM A VISIT...
"...AND MY PARENTS NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN ANYTHING TO ME, EVER AGAIN."
AAAIIEEE!
AAGHH!!

I'VE SPENT MY LIFE SEEKING THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. LEARNING ABOUT THE OLD GODS OF THE OUTER DARK AND HOW THEY PIERCED THE VEIL WHEN EARTH WAS NEWLY BORN.
WHEN THE OLD GODS DEPARTED, ONE REMAINED BEHIND. THE GOD OF MY PARENTS. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER PIERCINGS, HAVEN'T THERE? OF COURSE THERE HAVE!
OH, HO HO. HEH HEH. OF COURSE THERE HAVE. THE OUTER DARK HAS TOUCHED THE EARTH, PIERCED THE VEIL, MANY TIMES. LIKE THE DAY YOU WERE BORN, DEAR FELIX.
WHAT A JOYOUS DAY IT MUST HAVE BEEN. AND NOW ANOTHER JOYOUS DAY HAS ARRIVED. MY HEART IS SO FULL.
TODAY, YOU WILL BECOME WHAT YOU WERE ALWAYS MEANT TO BE...
AND IF ALL GOES WELL, IF ALL MY YEARS OF SEARCHING, OF STUDY, OF EXPERIMENTATION HAVE BORNE ANY FRUIT...
"...SO WILL I."

THE CONJURORS
Part
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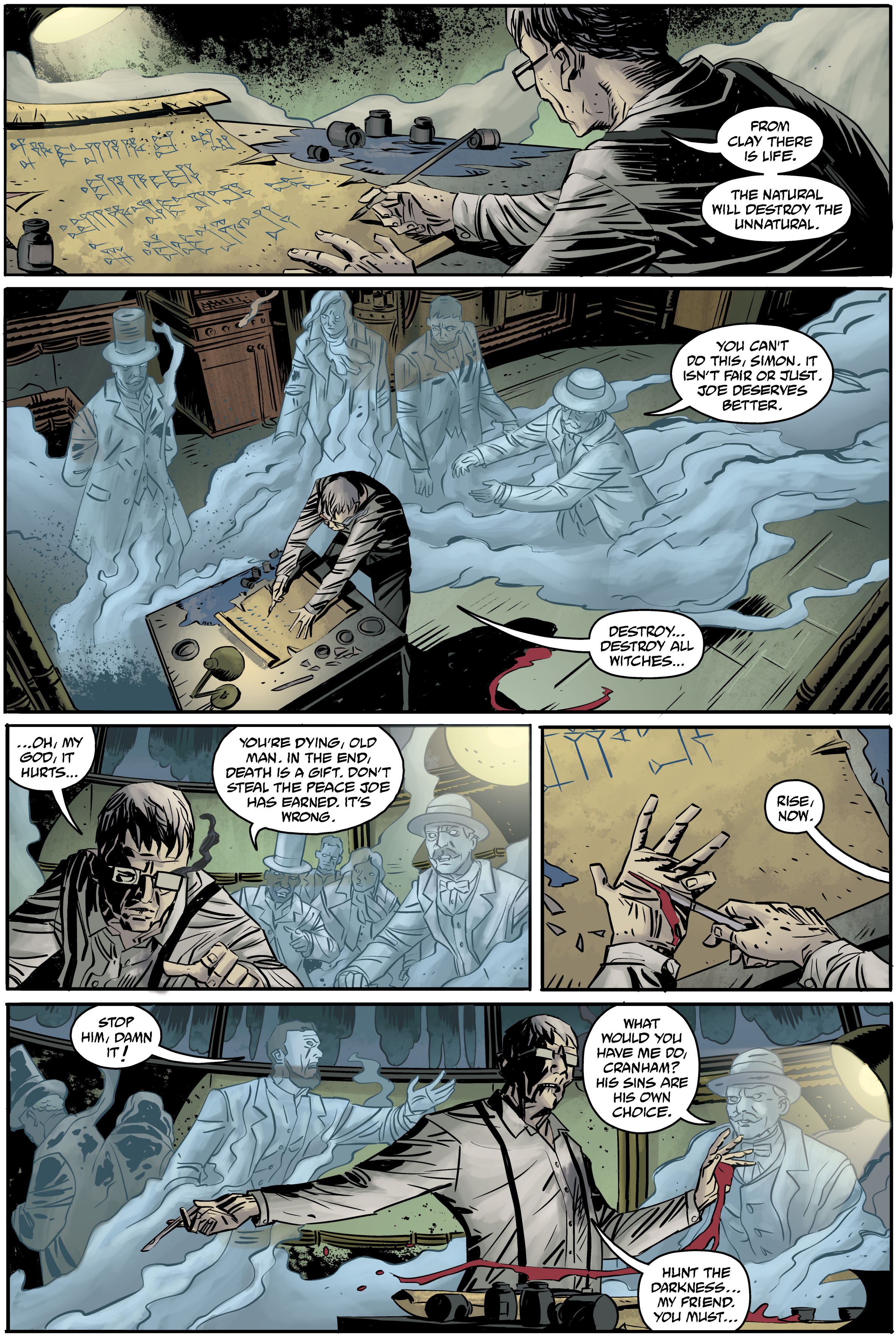
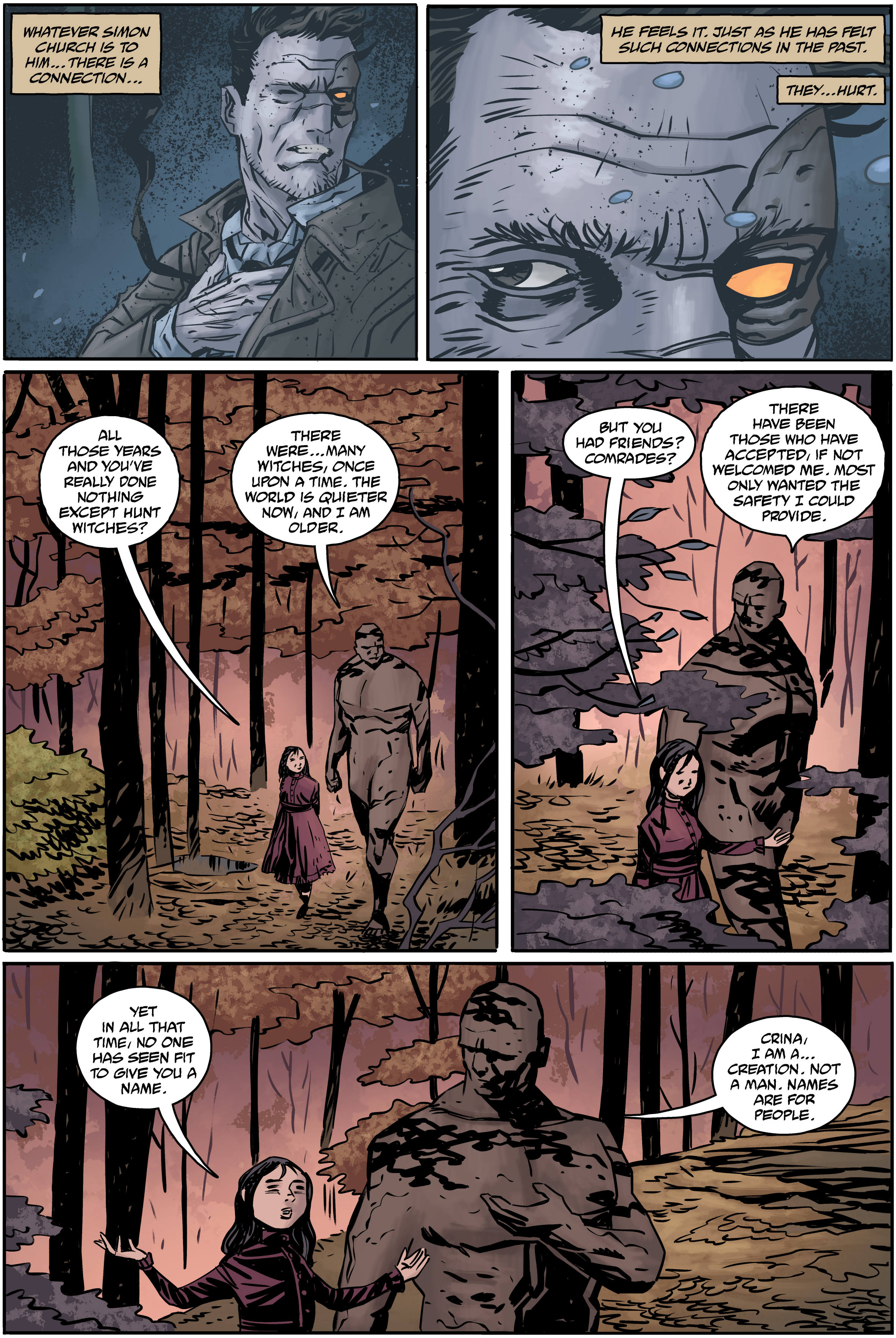

FROM CLAY THERE IS LIFE.
THE NATURAL WILL DESTROY THE UNNATURAL.
YOU CAN'T DO THIS, SIMON. IT ISN'T FAIR OR JUST. JOE DESERVES BETTER.
DESTROY... DESTROY ALL WITCHES...
...OH, MY GOD, IT HURTS...
YOU'RE DYING, OLD MAN. IN THE END, DEATH IS A GIFT. DON'T STEAL THE PEACE JOE HAS EARNED. IT'S WRONG.
RISE, NOW.
STOP HIM, DAMN IT!
WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO, CRANHAM? HIS SINS ARE HIS OWN CHOICE.
HUNT THE DARKNESS... MY FRIEND. YOU MUST...

"...HUNT THE DARKNESS...
"...AND LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE SUN."
HE CAN ALMOST FEEL SIMON CHURCH AT HIS SIDE.
OR PERHAPS NOT AT HIS SIDE, BUT IN HIS MIND.
THE WORDS ARE FAMILIAR SOMEHOW, AND THEY MAKE HIM WANT TO SCREAM, OR CRY. BUT HE STRUGGLES TO RECALL HIS CONNECTION TO THIS MAN.
IS CHURCH HIS FRIEND? HIS FATHER? HIS PRIEST? HIS CAPTOR?
"DESTROY ALL WITCHES. RISE NOW. HUNT THE DARKNESS..."

FROM CLAY THERE IS...LIFE...
YOU'RE A REAL BASTARD, SIMON.
HE DID SO MUCH FOR SO MANY IN HIS FIRST LIFE. HE SCOURED THE GLOBE FOR EVIL NONE OF US COULD HAVE SURVIVED. HE WAS A CHAMPION...
HE WAS REWARDED FOR HIS SERVICE. GIVEN A MAN'S LIFE TO LIVE, AND A MAN'S DEATH AT THE END...
HE HAS EARNED THE PEACE OF THE HERE-AFTER.
YOU KNOW, WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU ALL...
SKRITCH
I THOUGHT YOU HAD COME...
...TO COMFORT ME AS I DIED.

THAT IS PRECISELY WHY WE'VE COME, YOU FOOL.
YOU FOUGHT SO HARD, FOR SO LONG, TO HANG ONTO YOUR LIFE. WE KNEW HOW FRIGHTENED YOU WOULD BE TO FINALLY LET IT SLIP THROUGH YOUR FINGERS.
FOR DECADES YOU USED JOE TO FIGHT IN YOUR PLACE. NOW IN YOUR HUBRIS YOU FEEL YOUR FIGHT MUST GO ON, AND YOU CONTINUE TO USE HIM.
YOU THINK IF I BRING HIM BACK...HIS SPIRIT WILL NEVER KNOW PEACE...OR REST. BUT YOU CAN'T KNOW THAT. NONE OF US CAN.
THE WORLD HAS NEVER KNOWN ANYTHING LIKE HIM. A THING OF CLAY, IMBUED WITH SPIRIT, CHOSEN TO BE A CHAMPION, TO BECOME MORE THAN A MAN.
YES, I FEAR DEATH, MY FRIENDS. BUT NOW...IT COMES FOR ME...
...AND SOMEONE MUST BE HERE TO FIGHT.


WHATEVER SIMON CHURCH IS TO HIM... THERE IS A CONNECTION...
HE FEELS IT. JUST AS HE HAS FELT SUCH CONNECTIONS IN THE PAST.
THEY... HURT.
ALL THOSE YEARS AND YOU'VE REALLY DONE NOTHING EXCEPT HUNT WITCHES?
THERE WERE... MANY WITCHES, ONCE UPON A TIME. THE WORLD IS QUIETER NOW, AND I AM OLDER.
BUT YOU HAD FRIENDS? COMRADES?
THERE HAVE BEEN THOSE WHO HAVE ACCEPTED, IF NOT WELCOMED ME. MOST ONLY WANTED THE SAFETY I COULD PROVIDE.
YET IN ALL THAT TIME, NO ONE HAS SEEN FIT TO GIVE YOU A NAME.
CRINA, I AM A... CREATION. NOT A MAN. NAMES ARE FOR PEOPLE.

I MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO CALL YOU. IT JUST SEEMS SO...
OH.
I HAD FORGOTTEN THIS PLACE...
I DID THIS...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THESE WERE THE WITCHES WHO LIVED ON YOUR FARM MANY YEARS AGO. I LEFT THEM LIKE THIS TO WARD OFF OTHER WITCHES, KEEP THEM FROM SETTLING HERE.
IT SEEMS TO BE WORKING.
MIGHT BE. THE SCENT THAT DREW ME HERE COULD BE AN OLD ONE, LINGERING FROM THOSE LONG-DEAD WITCHES. AND YET...
COME. ENOUGH OF THE WOODS. MY GRANDMOTHER WILL BE EXPECTING US TO RETURN BY NOW.
THAT SCENT...
CRINA...

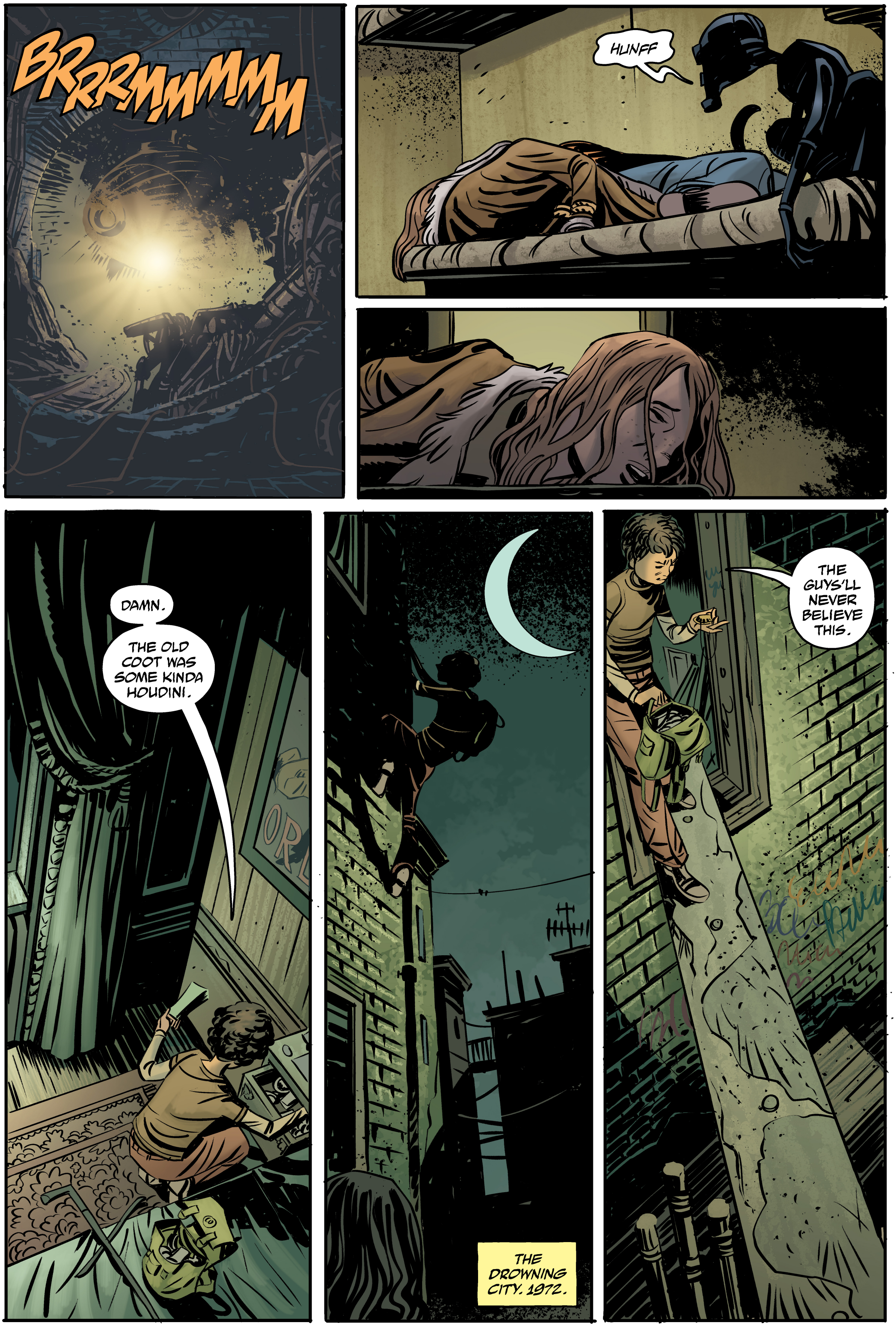
WHERE IS GRAND-FATHER?
HE'S IN THE BARN, CHILD...
"...HE'S GONE."
WHERE ARE THEY? I SMELL THEM!
WHERE ARE...
YOU LIED TO ME... WITCH.

DON'T DO THIS! YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED? MY GRANDFATHER HAS BEEN MURDERED AND NOW YOU ACCUSE--
I AM NO WITCH. BUT THAT WAS NOT ALWAYS TRUE.
MOST OF THE WITCHES YOU'VE HUNTED ARE INHUMAN THINGS, AN ANCIENT BREED. OTHERS ARE THE TAINTED ONES THEY'VE SHARED THEIR MAGIC WITH.
ORDINARY WITCHCRAFT--SMALL MAGIC, POTIONS AND REMEDIES, SCRYING THE FATES--HAS NOTHING EVIL IN IT. I PRACTICED THE ART IN MY YOUNGER YEARS, BUT NO LONGER.
YOU NEVER TOLD ME...
THE DARK WITCHES SEDUCE THOSE WITH A GLIMMER OF MAGIC IN THEM. OFFER THEM GREATER POWER. I ABANDONED THEM TO KEEP US ALL SAFE. BUT I'VE FAILED.
WE WILL TALK AGAIN, OLD WOMAN.
MY FRIEND... WAIT.
WHEN YOU FIND THE WITCH THAT DID THIS...KILL HER.
SHE IS A WITCH...

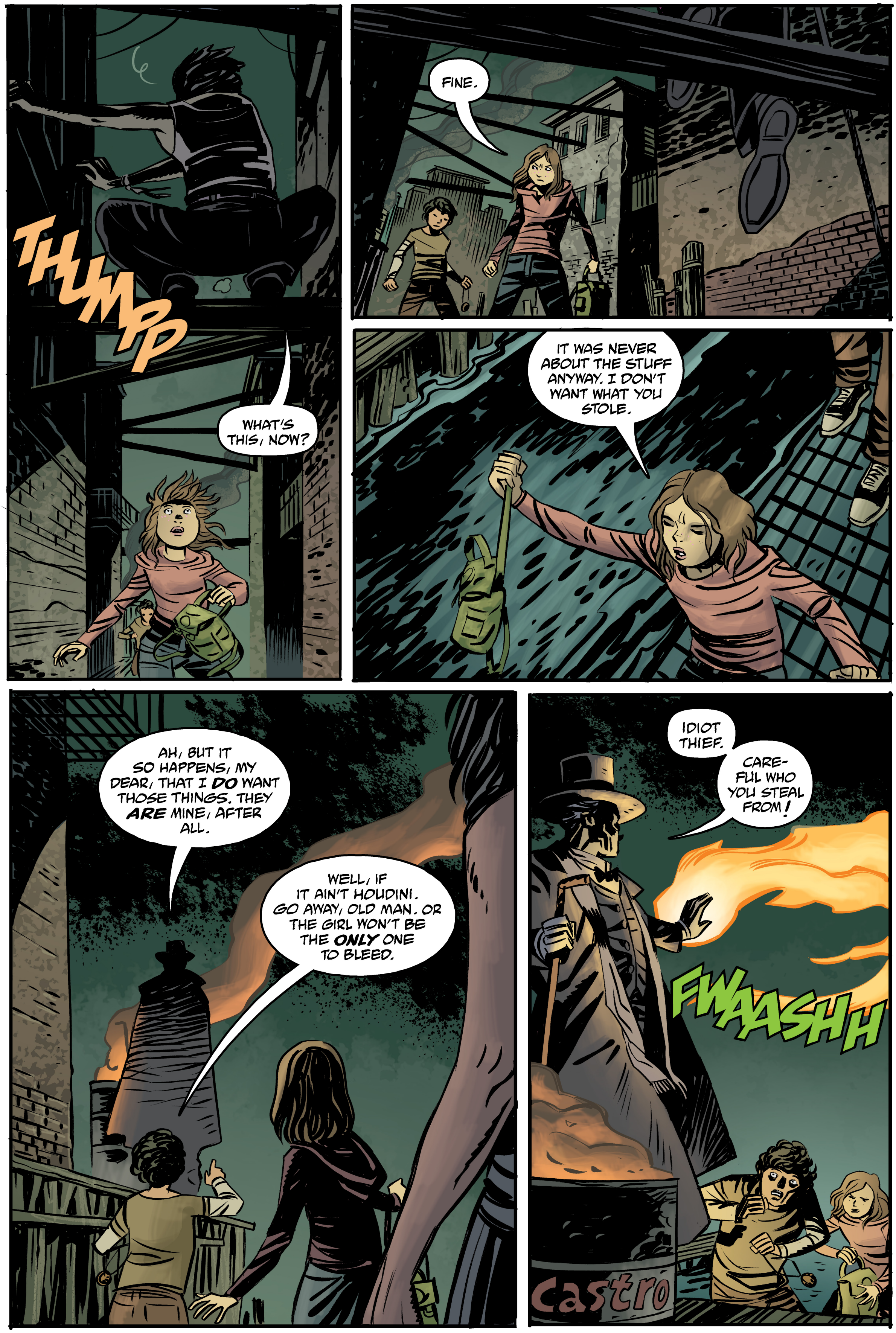
"...AND ALL WITCHES MUST DIE."
CAPITOL
HUNFF
IS IT...
...IS IT DONE?

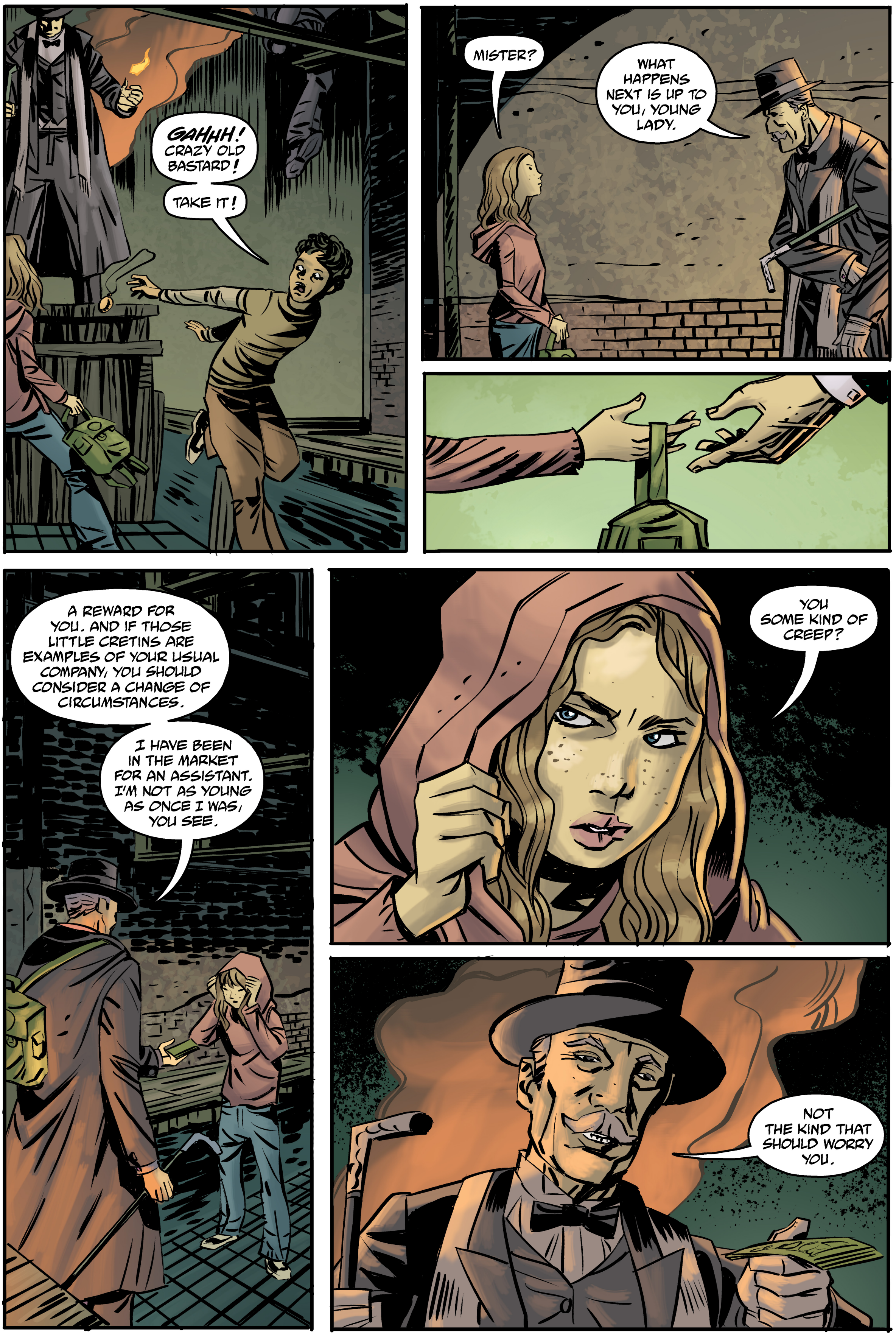
IT IS.
COME, SIMON. TAKE MY HAND.
EVERY-THING WILL BE ALL RIGHT.

"IS IT DONE?"
"IT IS."
MOLLY.
WITCHES.

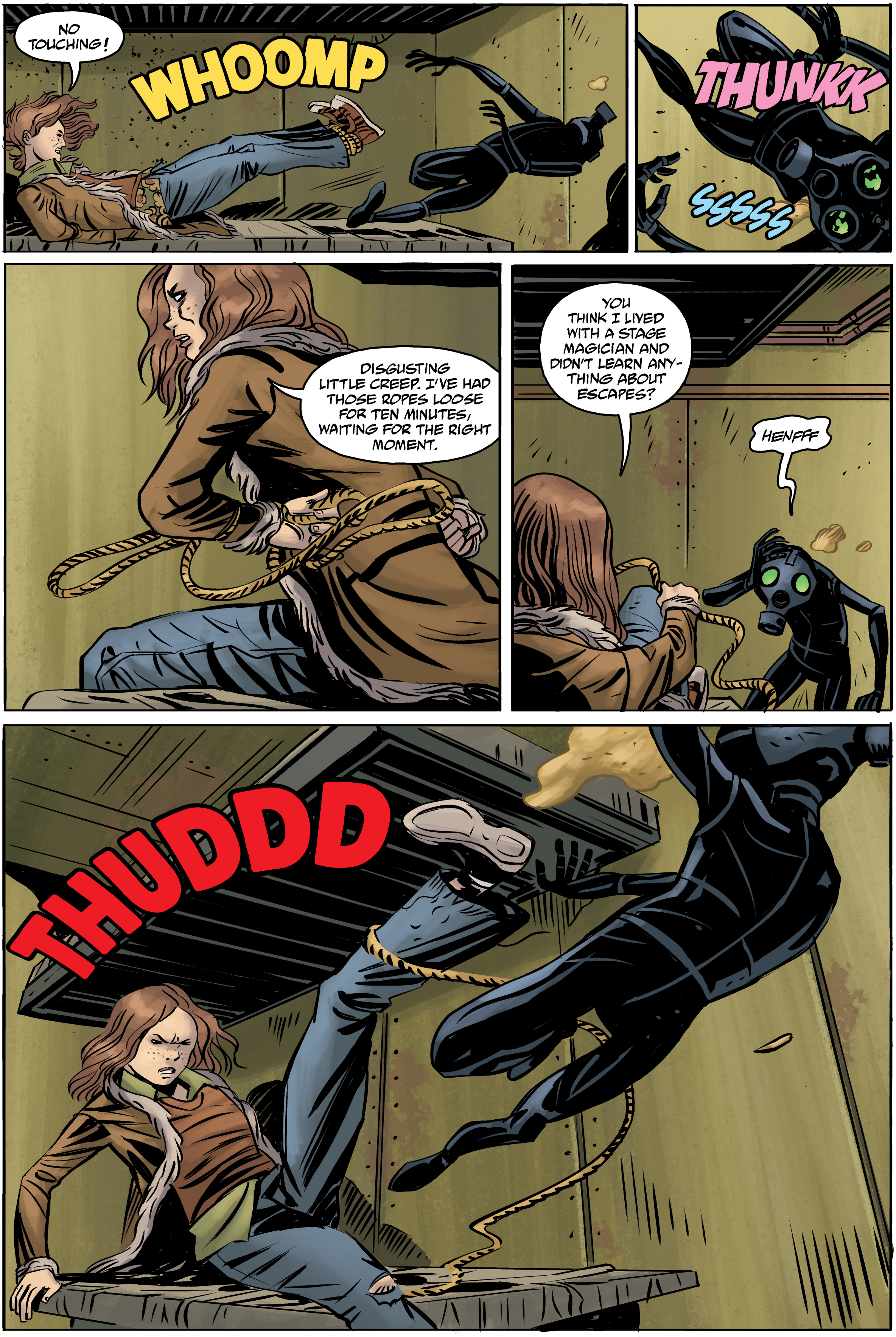

BRRRMMMMM
HUNFF
DAMN.
THE OLD COOT WAS SOME KINDA HOUDINI.
THE DROWNING CITY. 1972.
THE GUYS'LL NEVER BELIEVE THIS.

THANKS!
GET YOUR ASS BACK HERE, YOU LITTLE--
NOT A CHANCE, RICHIE. AFTER WHAT YOU DID TO ME...
WHOA!
...YOU'VE GOTTA PAY!
THINK YOU'RE BETTER THAN US, GIRLY, BUT YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER WATER RAT LIKE--
NOT LIKE *YOU!*
OLLY OLLY, EE! OLLY OLLY, EEEEEEE!


THUMPP
WHAT'S THIS, NOW?
FINE.
IT WAS NEVER ABOUT THE STUFF ANYWAY. I DON'T WANT WHAT YOU STOLE.
AH, BUT IT SO HAPPENS, MY DEAR, THAT I DO WANT THOSE THINGS. THEY ARE MINE, AFTER ALL.
WELL, IF IT AIN'T HOUDINI. GO AWAY, OLD MAN. OR THE GIRL WON'T BE THE ONLY ONE TO BLEED.
IDIOT THIEF.
CARE-FUL WHO YOU STEAL FROM!
FWAASHH
Castro


GAHHH! CRAZY OLD BASTARD!
TAKE IT!
MISTER?
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS UP TO YOU, YOUNG LADY.
A REWARD FOR YOU. AND IF THOSE LITTLE CRETINS ARE EXAMPLES OF YOUR USUAL COMPANY, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER A CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.
I HAVE BEEN IN THE MARKET FOR AN ASSISTANT. I'M NOT AS YOUNG AS ONCE I WAS, YOU SEE.
YOU SOME KIND OF CREEP?
NOT THE KIND THAT SHOULD WORRY YOU.

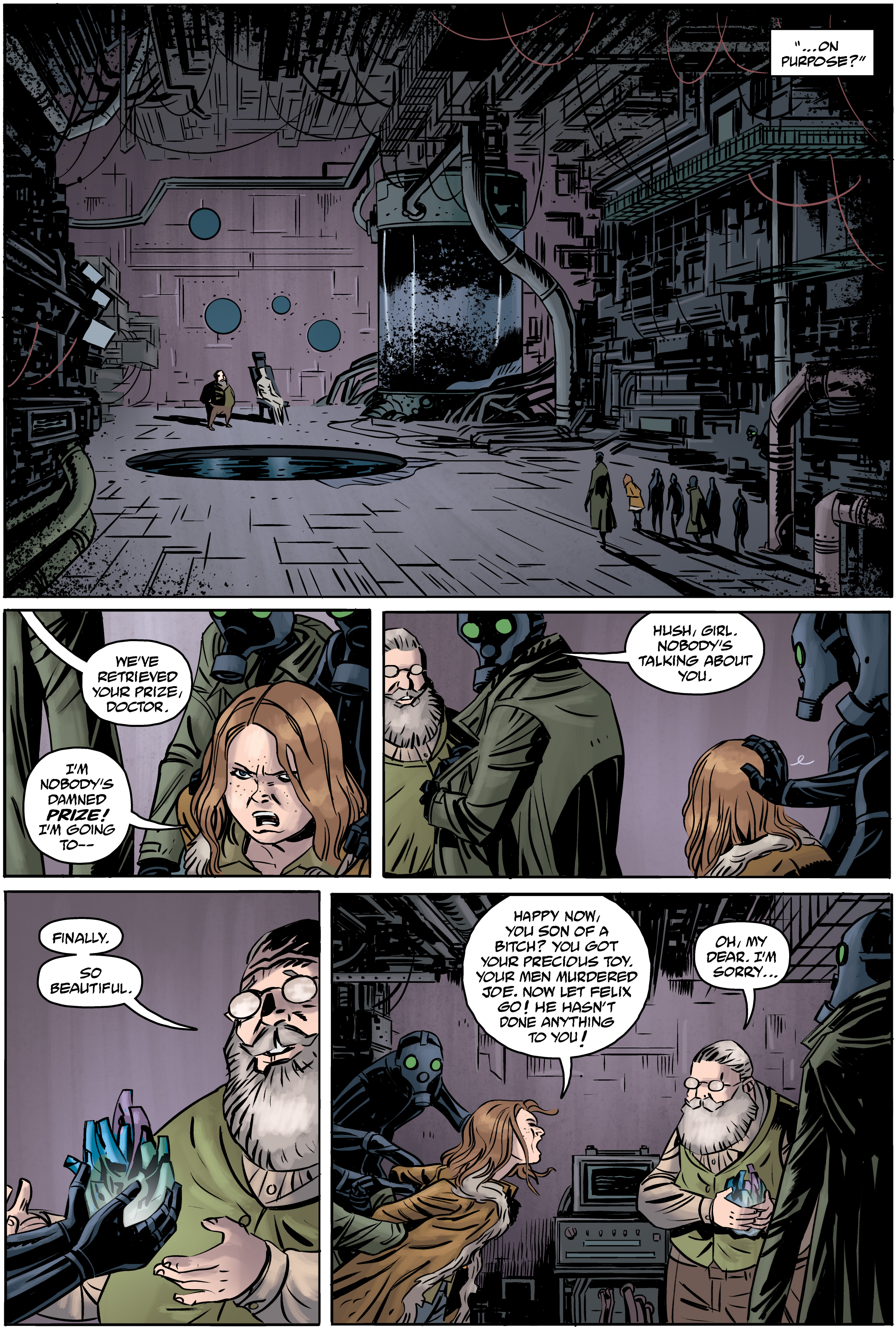
WELL, ALL RIGHT THEN.
HENNFF
MMMMMFF

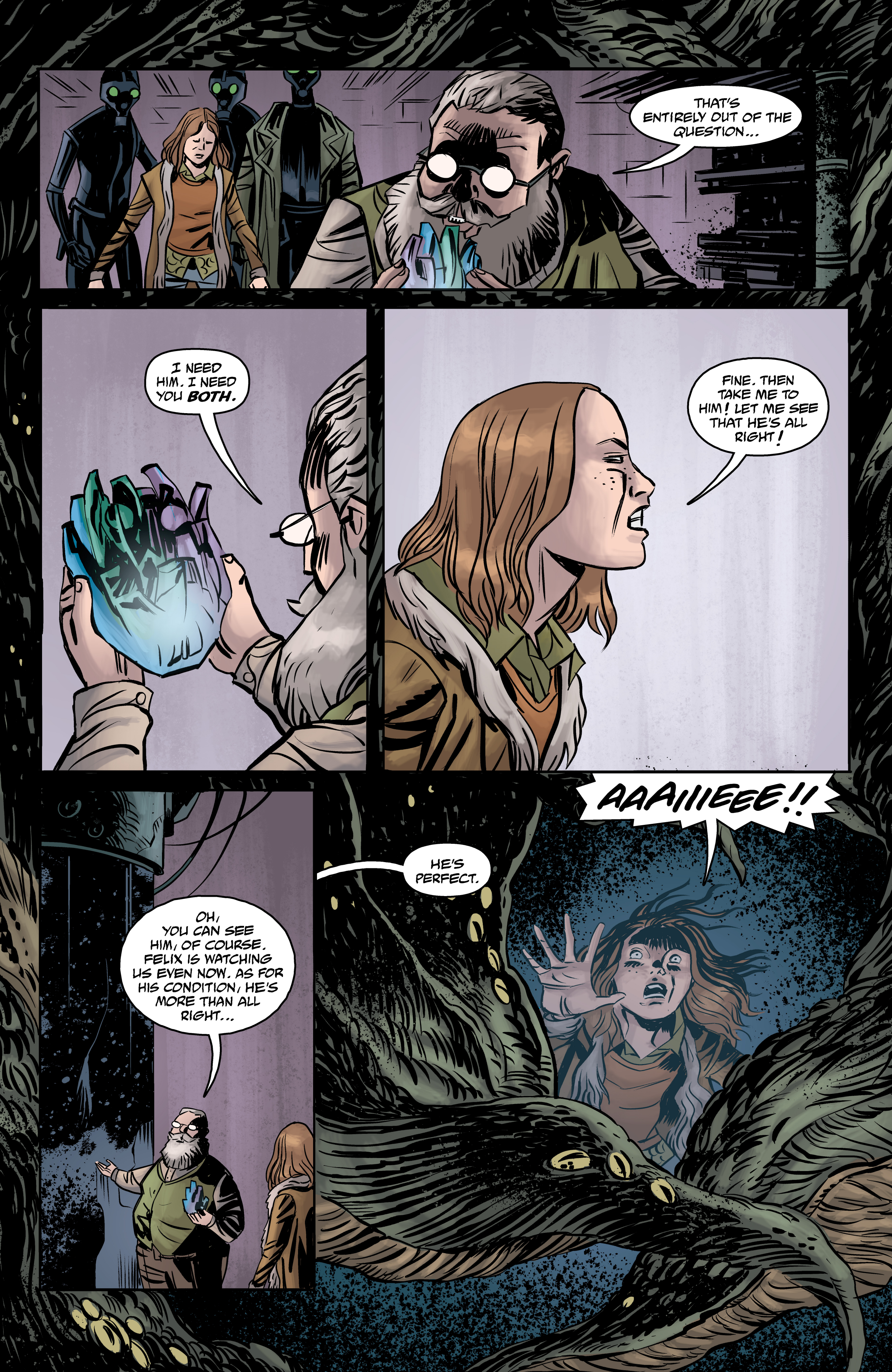

NO TOUCHING!
WHOOMP
THUNKK
SSSSS
DISGUSTING LITTLE CREEP. I'VE HAD THOSE ROPES LOOSE FOR TEN MINUTES, WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT.
YOU THINK I LIVED WITH A STAGE MAGICIAN AND DIDN'T LEARN ANY-THING ABOUT ESCAPES?
HENFFF
THUDDD

MOVE, GIRL. JUST GO GO GO--
SKREEEEEE
WE HAVE ARRIVED.
HENNFFF

"FROM CLAY THERE IS LIFE...
"...HUNT THE DARKNESS...
"...AND LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF THE SUN."
CRINA.

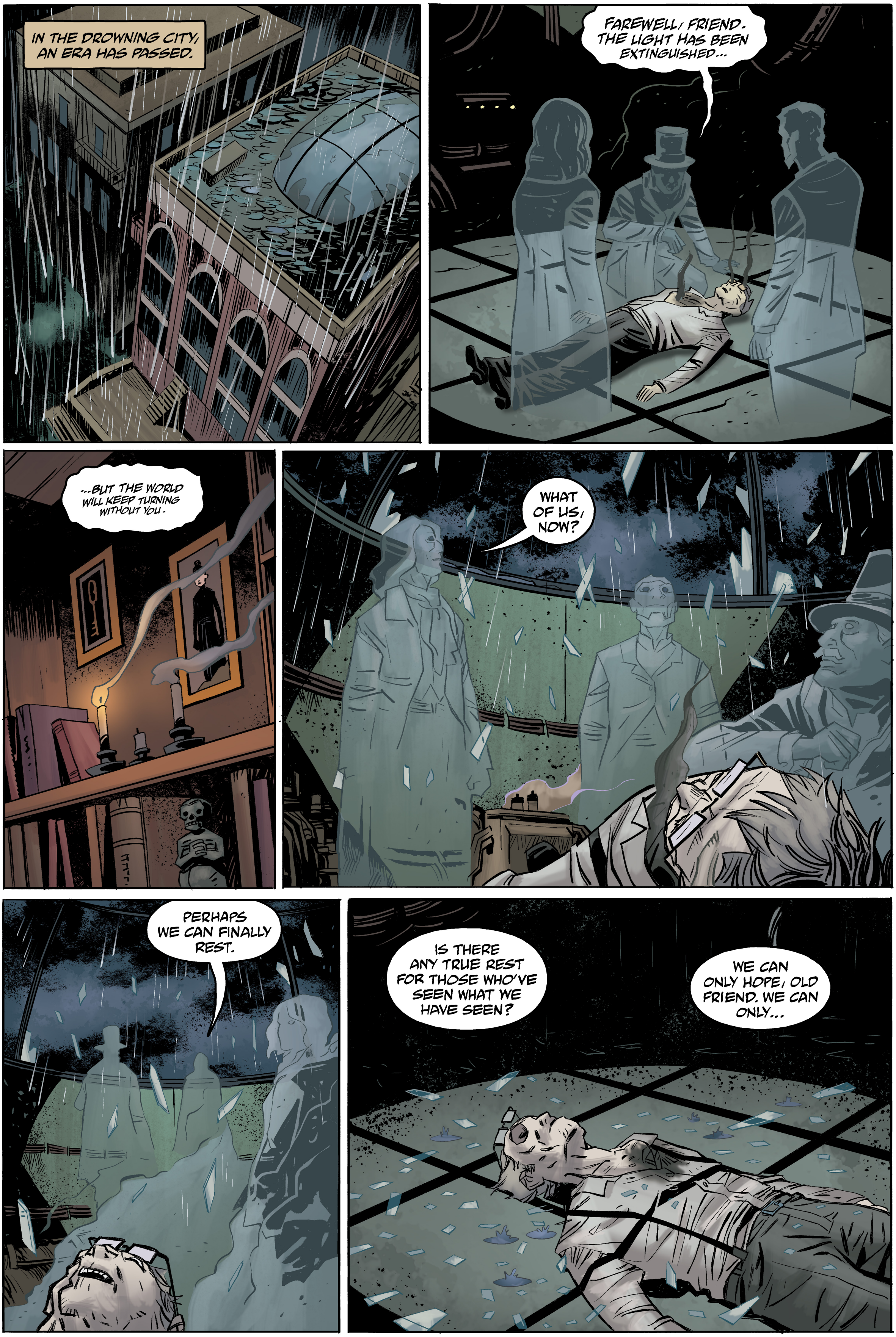
THUNK
THUNK
SKREETCHHH
ALL RIGHT! I'M WALKING, OKAY? WHAT THE HELL IS THIS PLACE?
YOU GUYS LIVE DOWN HERE?

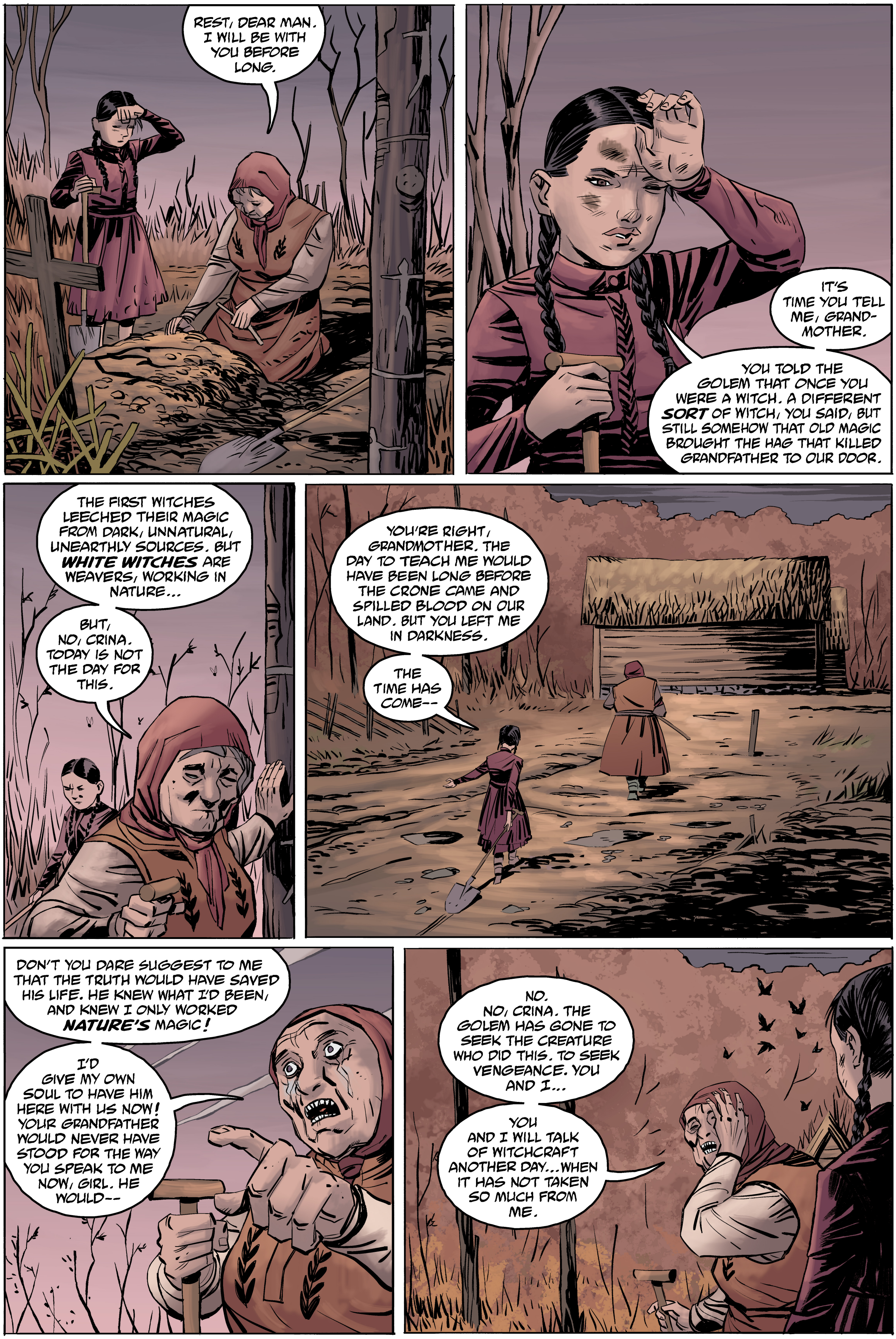

"...ON PURPOSE?"
WE'VE RETRIEVED YOUR PRIZE, DOCTOR.
I'M NOBODY'S DAMNED PRIZE! I'M GOING TO--
HUSH, GIRL. NOBODY'S TALKING ABOUT YOU.
FINALLY.
SO BEAUTIFUL.
HAPPY NOW, YOU SON OF A BITCH? YOU GOT YOUR PRECIOUS TOY. YOUR MEN MURDERED JOE. NOW LET FELIX GO! HE HASN'T DONE ANYTHING TO YOU!
OH, MY DEAR. I'M SORRY...


THAT'S ENTIRELY OUT OF THE QUESTION...
I NEED HIM. I NEED YOU **BOTH**.
FINE. THEN TAKE ME TO HIM! LET ME SEE THAT HE'S ALL RIGHT!
OH, YOU CAN SEE HIM, OF COURSE. FELIX IS WATCHING US EVEN NOW. AS FOR HIS CONDITION, HE'S MORE THAN ALL RIGHT...
HE'S PERFECT.
AAAIIIEEE!!

THE CONJURORS

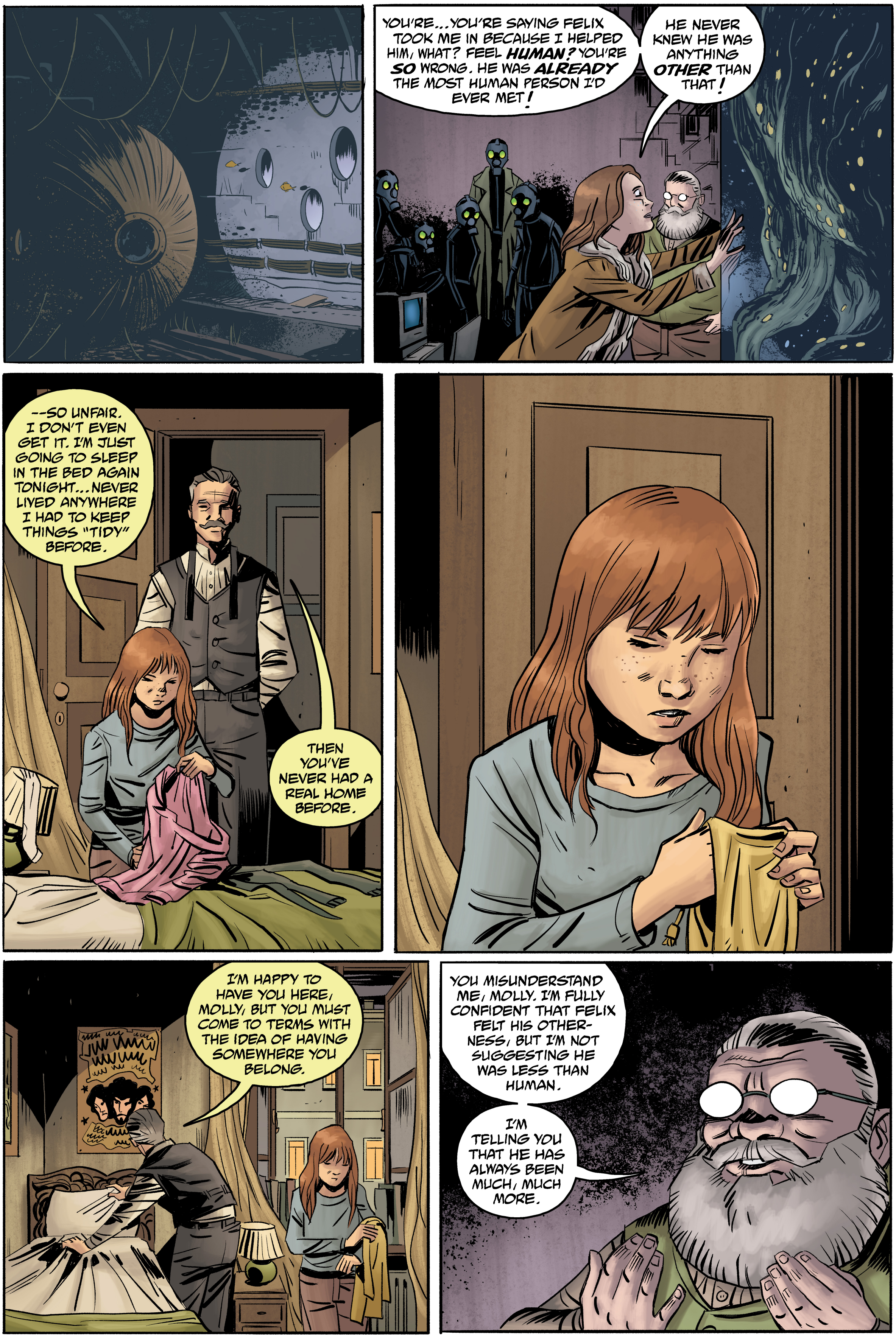
Part
3


IN THE DROWNING CITY, AN ERA HAS PASSED.
FAREWELL, FRIEND. THE LIGHT HAS BEEN EXTINGUISHED...
...BUT THE WORLD WILL KEEP TURNING WITHOUT YOU.
WHAT OF US, NOW?
PERHAPS WE CAN FINALLY REST.
IS THERE ANY TRUE REST FOR THOSE WHO'VE SEEN WHAT WE HAVE SEEN?
WE CAN ONLY HOPE, OLD FRIEND. WE CAN ONLY...

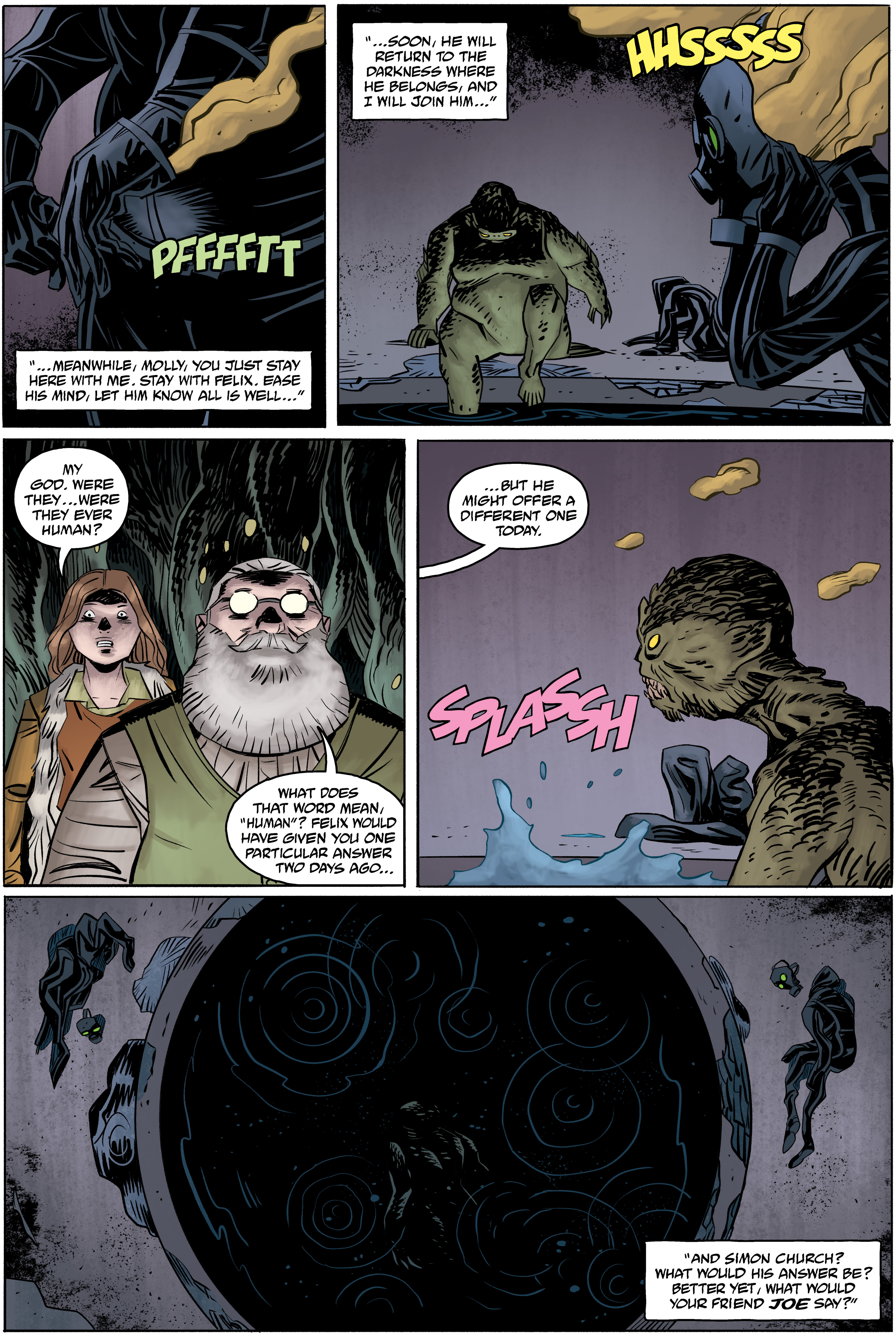

REST, DEAR MAN. I WILL BE WITH YOU BEFORE LONG.
IT'S TIME YOU TELL ME, GRAND-MOTHER.
YOU TOLD THE GOLEM THAT ONCE YOU WERE A WITCH. A DIFFERENT SORT OF WITCH, YOU SAID, BUT STILL SOMEHOW THAT OLD MAGIC BROUGHT THE HAG THAT KILLED GRANDFATHER TO OUR DOOR.
THE FIRST WITCHES LEECHED THEIR MAGIC FROM DARK, UNNATURAL, UNEARTHLY SOURCES. BUT WHITE WITCHES ARE WEAVERS, WORKING IN NATURE...
BUT, NO, CRINA. TODAY IS NOT THE DAY FOR THIS.
YOU'RE RIGHT, GRANDMOTHER. THE DAY TO TEACH ME WOULD HAVE BEEN LONG BEFORE THE CRONE CAME AND SPILLED BLOOD ON OUR LAND. BUT YOU LEFT ME IN DARKNESS.
THE TIME HAS COME--
DON'T YOU DARE SUGGEST TO ME THAT THE TRUTH WOULD HAVE SAVED HIS LIFE. HE KNEW WHAT I'D BEEN, AND KNEW I ONLY WORKED NATURE'S MAGIC!
I'D GIVE MY OWN SOUL TO HAVE HIM HERE WITH US NOW! YOUR GRANDFATHER WOULD NEVER HAVE STOOD FOR THE WAY YOU SPEAK TO ME NOW, GIRL. HE WOULD--
NO. NO, CRINA. THE GOLEM HAS GONE TO SEEK THE CREATURE WHO DID THIS. TO SEEK VENGEANCE. YOU AND I...
YOU AND I WILL TALK OF WITCHCRAFT ANOTHER DAY...WHEN IT HAS NOT TAKEN SO MUCH FROM ME.

LATER.
TO HELL WITH THIS.
THE WITCH MUST DIE, GRANDFATHER. AND THE ONLY WAY TO BE SURE...IS TO SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES...
...TO SPILL HER BLOOD WITH MY OWN HANDS.

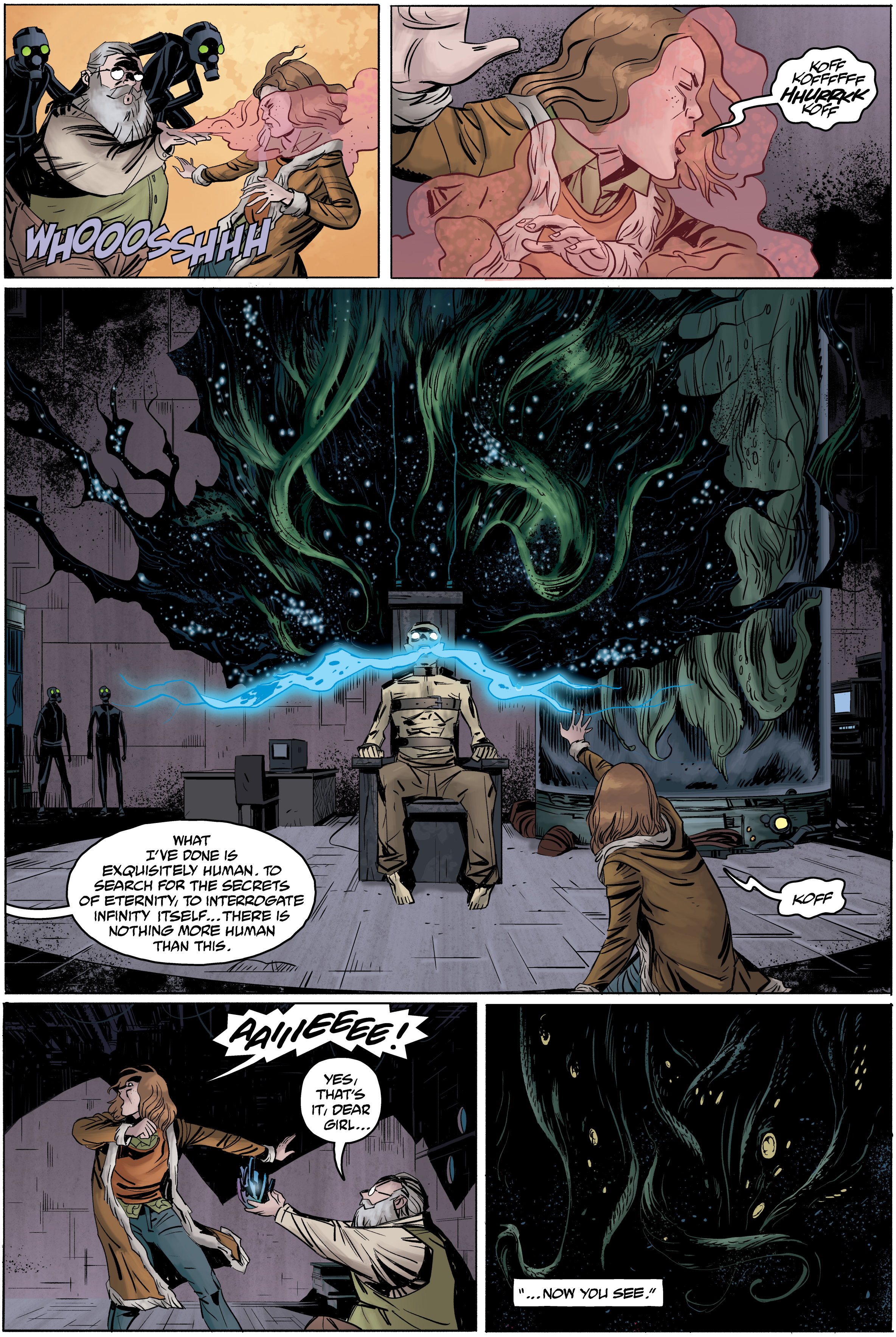
HE STRUGGLES TO REMEMBER HIS OWN NAME. HIS THOUGHTS ARE SLUGGISH.
THERE IS A GIRL--HE KNOWS THAT--BUT **HER** NAME ELUDES HIM AS WELL.
HOW HAS HE COME TO BE HERE? WHAT IS HIS PURPOSE?
SKRITCH
OH, YES. HE SENSES IT NOW.
WITCHCRAFT.


YOU'RE...YOU'RE SAYING FELIX TOOK ME IN BECAUSE I HELPED HIM, WHAT? FEEL **HUMAN?** YOU'RE **SO** WRONG. HE WAS **ALREADY** THE MOST HUMAN PERSON I'D EVER MET!
HE NEVER KNEW HE WAS ANYTHING **OTHER** THAN THAT!
--SO UNFAIR. I DON'T EVEN GET IT. I'M JUST GOING TO SLEEP IN THE BED AGAIN TONIGHT...NEVER LIVED ANYWHERE I HAD TO KEEP THINGS "TIDY" BEFORE.
THEN YOU'VE NEVER HAD A REAL HOME BEFORE.
I'M HAPPY TO HAVE YOU HERE, MOLLY, BUT YOU MUST COME TO TERMS WITH THE IDEA OF HAVING SOMEWHERE YOU BELONG.
YOU MISUNDERSTAND ME, MOLLY. I'M FULLY CONFIDENT THAT FELIX FELT HIS OTHER-NESS, BUT I'M NOT SUGGESTING HE WAS LESS THAN HUMAN.
I'M TELLING YOU THAT HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN MUCH, MUCH MORE.

NO. YOU DID THIS TO HIM! I DON'T KNOW HOW, AND I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT THIS IS YOUR FAULT. CHANGE HIM BACK!
DEAR GIRL, FELIX DOES NOT BELONG IN THIS WORLD. I AM HELPING HIM DISCOVER HIS TRUE NATURE, AND HE MUST HELP ME IN RETURN. YOU WILL MAKE CERTAIN HE DOES SO.
I HAVE HELP OF MY OWN. SIMON CHURCH...HE'LL FIND YOU.
IT'S NOT THAT RICKETY, RUSTING OLD FOOL WHO CONCERNS ME.
SEXTUS. EPHREM. WE'LL TAKE NO CHANCES, IF YOU PLEASE.
GO AND MAKE CERTAIN CHURCH'S MONSTROSITY HASN'T FOLLOWED THE GIRL.
IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT JOE...YOUR CULT OF WEIRDOS KILLED HIM.
SEXTUS AND EPHREM WILL MAKE CERTAIN OF THAT. I'VE CROSSED PATHS WITH YOUR FRIEND JOE BEFORE AND HE'S PROVEN QUITE DIFFICULT TO KILL. I'VE CERTAINLY TRIED...


PFFFFTT
"...MEANWHILE, MOLLY, YOU JUST STAY HERE WITH ME. STAY WITH FELIX. EASE HIS MIND, LET HIM KNOW ALL IS WELL..."
"...SOON, HE WILL RETURN TO THE DARKNESS WHERE HE BELONGS, AND I WILL JOIN HIM..."
HHSSSSS
MY GOD. WERE THEY...WERE THEY EVER HUMAN?
WHAT DOES THAT WORD MEAN, "HUMAN"? FELIX WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU ONE PARTICULAR ANSWER TWO DAYS AGO...
...BUT HE MIGHT OFFER A DIFFERENT ONE TODAY.
SPLASSH
"AND SIMON CHURCH? WHAT WOULD HIS ANSWER BE? BETTER YET, WHAT WOULD YOUR FRIEND JOE SAY?"

OH, IT'S NO USE. FORGIVE ME, MOLLY, MY THOUGHTS WANDER AND I FORGET HOW NARROW THE HUMAN MIND CAN BE WHEN IT WALLOWS IN IGNORANCE.
YOU'RE A LUNATIC.
I NEED YOU TO UNDERSTAND, GIRL. FELIX'S TRANSITION WILL COME SO MUCH EASIER IF YOU CAN SOOTHE HIS FEARS. SO IT FALLS TO ME TO ENLIGHTEN YOU.
ONE OF US NEEDS SOME ENLIGHTENMENT, DOC, AND IT ISN'T ME. DO YOU REALLY THINK I'M GOING TO--
I THINK YOU'RE GOING TO LISTEN! FOR FELIX'S SAKE, IF NOT YOUR OWN.
OH MY... OH...
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? IT'S... MONSTROUS.
NO, MY DEAR...


WHOOOSSHHH
KOFF KOFFFFFF HHURRKK KOFF
WHAT I'VE DONE IS EXQUISITELY HUMAN. TO SEARCH FOR THE SECRETS OF ETERNITY, TO INTERROGATE INFINITY ITSELF... THERE IS NOTHING MORE HUMAN THAN THIS.
KOFF
AAIIIEEEEE!
YES, THAT'S IT, DEAR GIRL...
"...NOW YOU SEE."

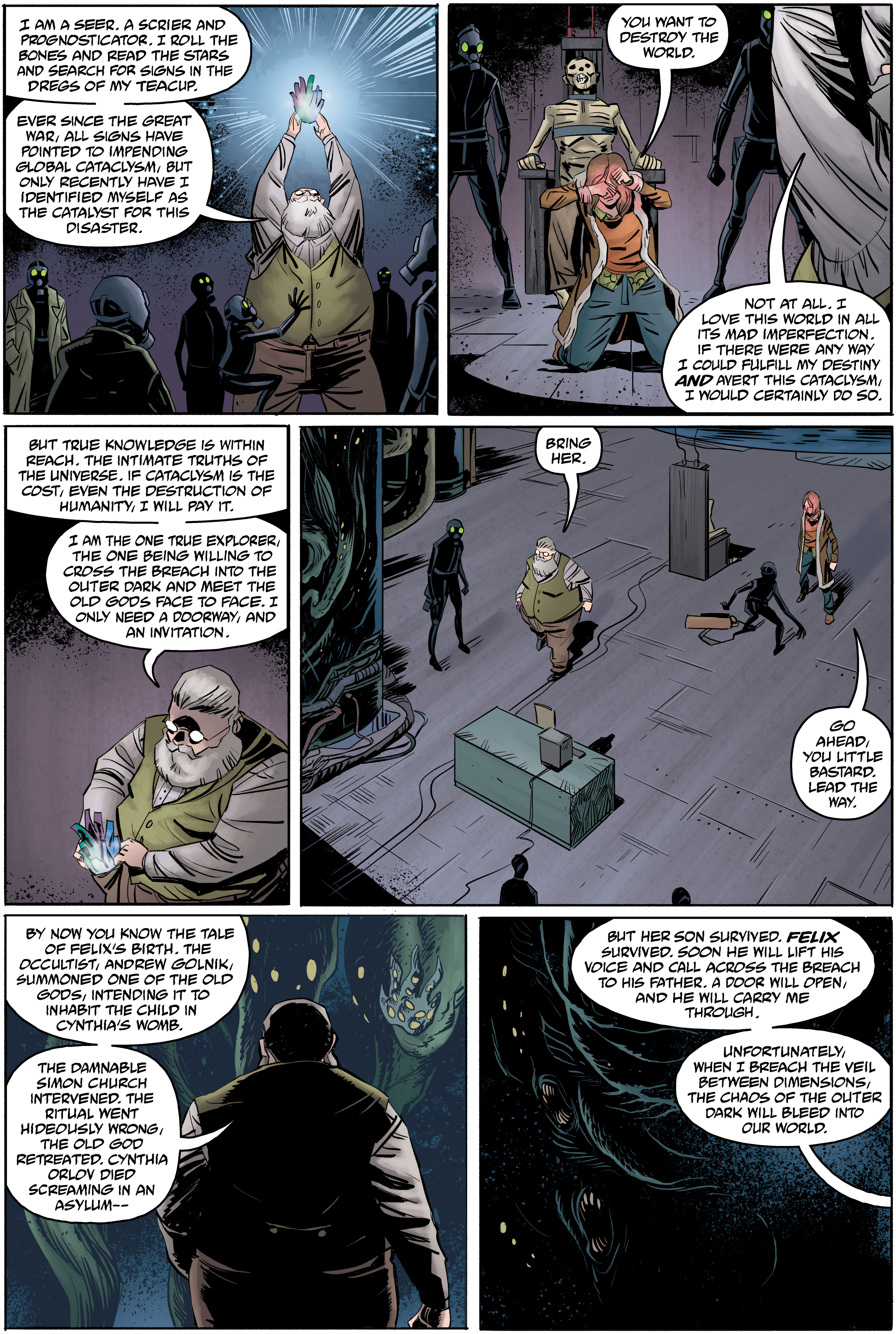
THE GIRL.
THE WITCHES HAVE HER.
YOU.
YOU?

EEEEEEEEEEEE
SPLUTTCHH
HHURRKKK HRRRNN
SNIFF SNIFF
YOU'RE NOT THE WITCH I SEEK. WHERE IS YOUR QUEEN?

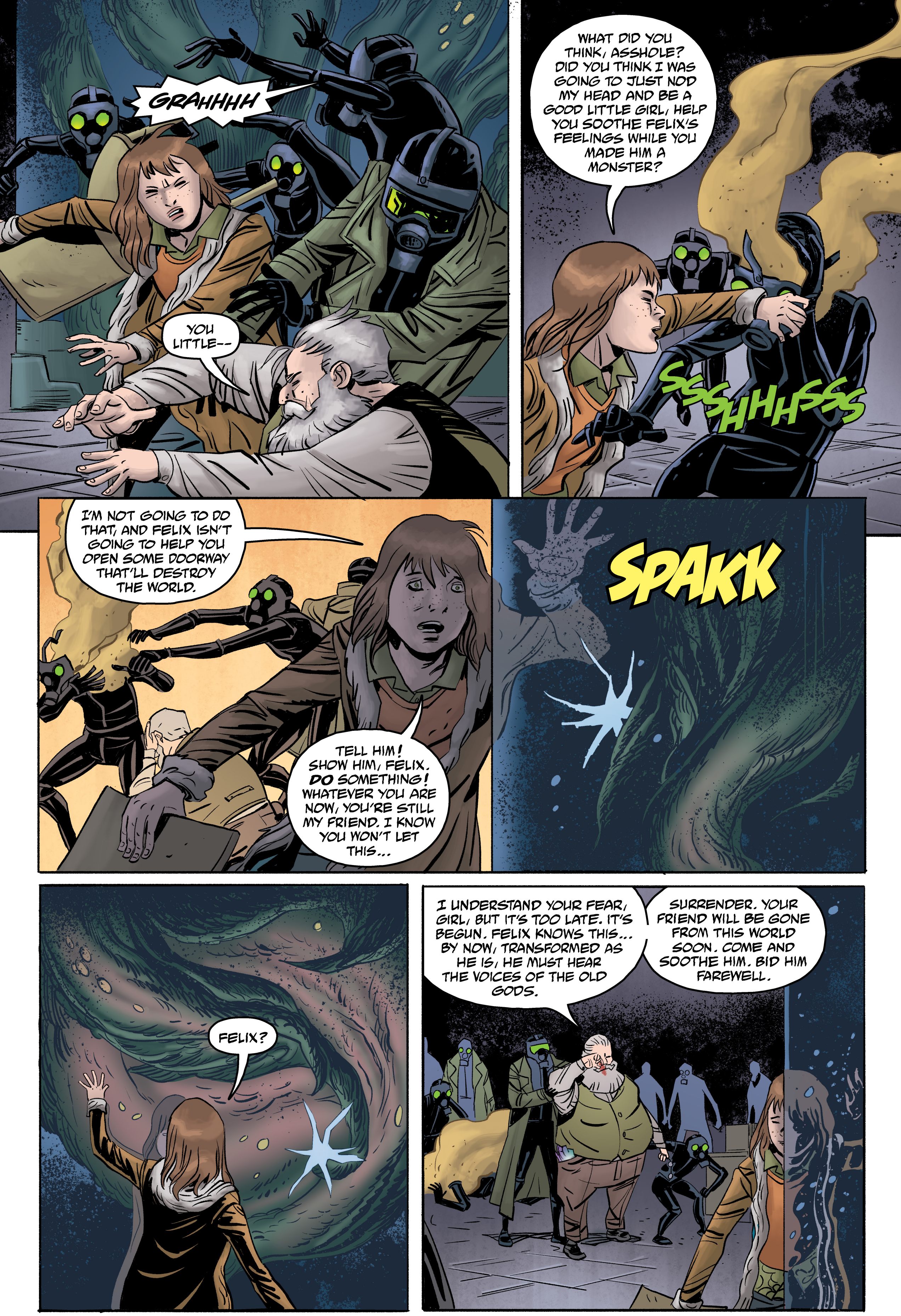
MOLLY.
NO. NOT MOLLY.
CRINA.
NOT AGAIN.

MY NAME IS CRINA COJACARU...
CRINA, NO.
YOU MURDERED MY GRANDFATHER, WITCH. THE PRICE FOR THAT CRIME IS YOUR BLOOD!

OH, LITTLE GIRL...
...I WILL SHOW YOU BLOOD.
KRAKKK
INDEED YOU WILL.
SHUNKKK
AT LAST.
WITCHES.


I AM A SEER. A SCRIER AND PROGNOSTICATOR. I ROLL THE BONES AND READ THE STARS AND SEARCH FOR SIGNS IN THE DREGS OF MY TEACUP.
EVER SINCE THE GREAT WAR, ALL SIGNS HAVE POINTED TO IMPENDING GLOBAL CATACLYSM, BUT ONLY RECENTLY HAVE I IDENTIFIED MYSELF AS THE CATALYST FOR THIS DISASTER.
YOU WANT TO DESTROY THE WORLD.
NOT AT ALL. I LOVE THIS WORLD IN ALL ITS MAD IMPERFECTION. IF THERE WERE ANY WAY I COULD FULFILL MY DESTINY ***AND*** AVERT THIS CATACLYSM, I WOULD CERTAINLY DO SO.
BUT TRUE KNOWLEDGE IS WITHIN REACH. THE INTIMATE TRUTHS OF THE UNIVERSE. IF CATACLYSM IS THE COST, EVEN THE DESTRUCTION OF HUMANITY, I WILL PAY IT.
I AM THE ONE TRUE EXPLORER, THE ONE BEING WILLING TO CROSS THE BREACH INTO THE OUTER DARK AND MEET THE OLD GODS FACE TO FACE. I ONLY NEED A DOORWAY, AND AN INVITATION.
BRING HER.
GO AHEAD, YOU LITTLE BASTARD. LEAD THE WAY.
BY NOW YOU KNOW THE TALE OF FELIX'S BIRTH. THE OCCULTIST, ANDREW GOLNIK, SUMMONED ONE OF THE OLD GODS, INTENDING IT TO INHABIT THE CHILD IN CYNTHIA'S WOMB.
THE DAMNABLE SIMON CHURCH INTERVENED. THE RITUAL WENT HIDEOUSLY WRONG, THE OLD GOD RETREATED. CYNTHIA ORLOV DIED SCREAMING IN AN ASYLUM--
BUT HER SON SURVIVED. ***FELIX*** SURVIVED. SOON HE WILL LIFT HIS VOICE AND CALL ACROSS THE BREACH TO HIS FATHER. A DOOR WILL OPEN, AND HE WILL CARRY ME THROUGH.
UNFORTUNATELY, WHEN I BREACH THE VEIL BETWEEN DIMENSIONS, THE CHAOS OF THE OUTER DARK WILL BLEED INTO OUR WORLD.

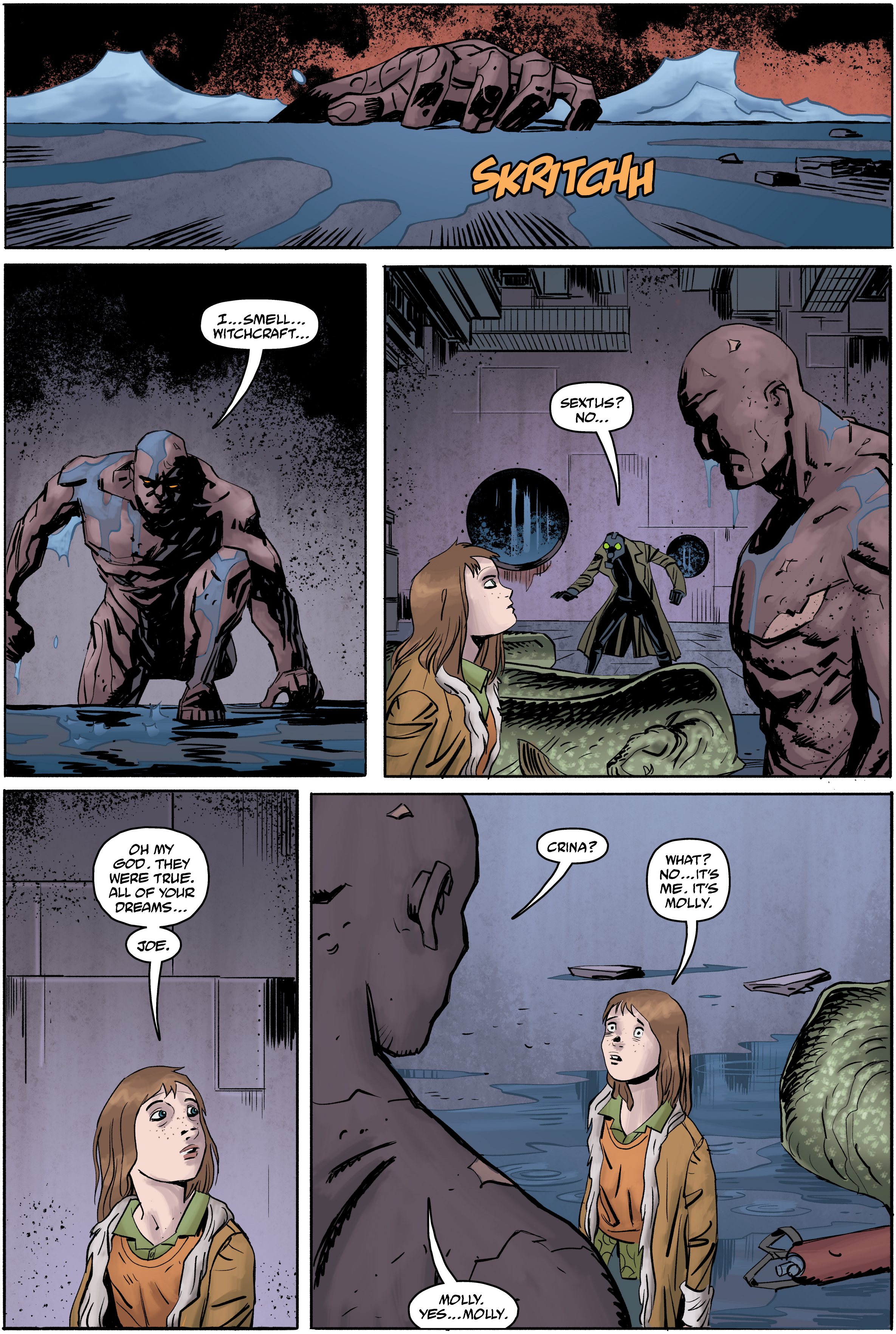
THE PLANET WILL CONVULSE. IT MAY TEAR ITSELF APART. EARTHQUAKES, VOLCANIC UPHEAVAL, AND WORSE. BUT WITH LUCK--
LOOK AT ME, DOCTOR. I NEED TO SEE YOUR EYES.
PERFECT!
KRAKK
UNNHHGG
WHATEVER THE HELL FELIX MIGHT BE, HE'S NOT YOUR TICKET ACROSS THE DAMN UNIVERSE!
KLANGG
GRRAGGHHH
HE'S NOT YOUR EXPERIMENT!



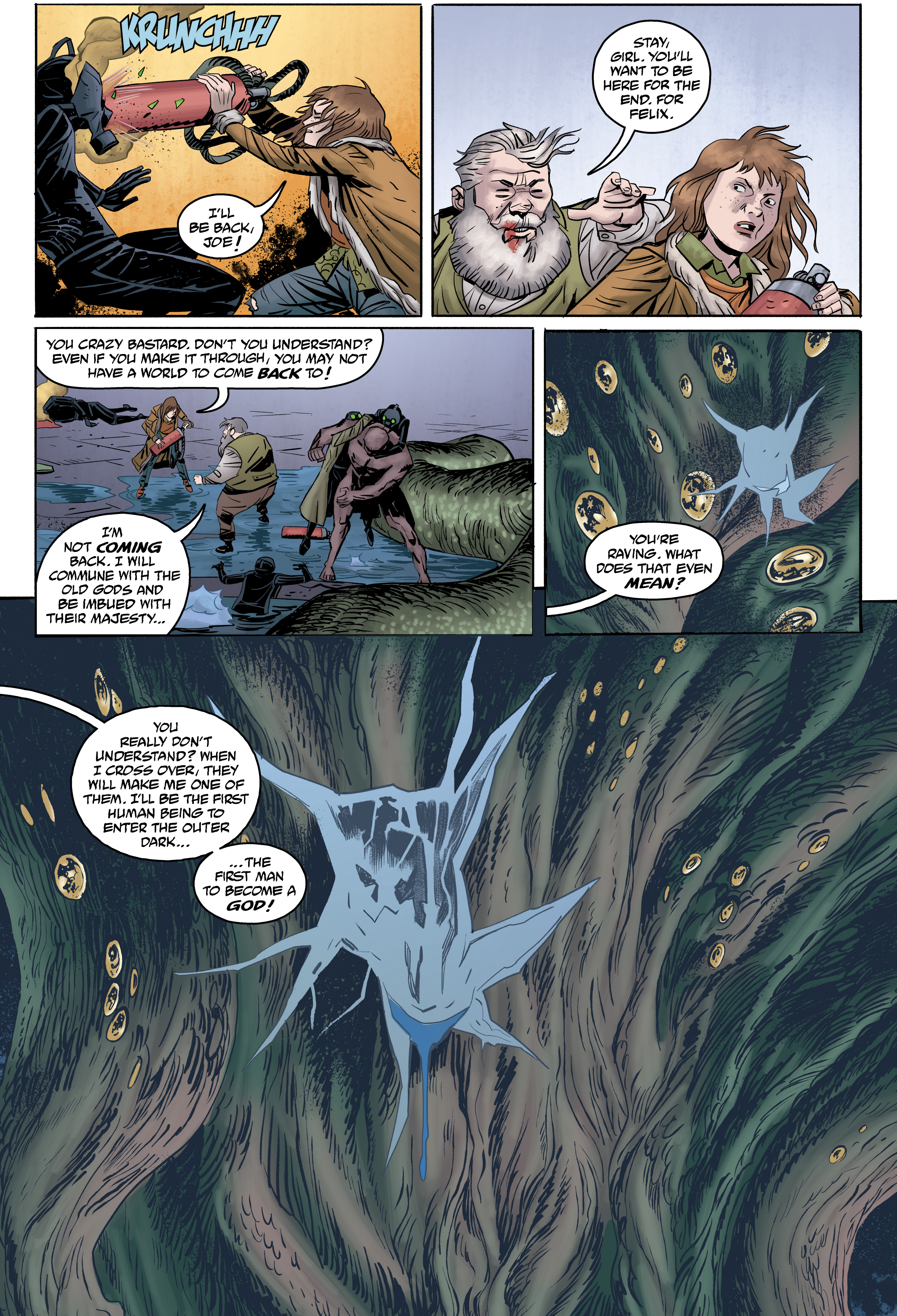
GRAHHHH
YOU LITTLE--
WHAT DID YOU THINK, ASSHOLE? DID YOU THINK I WAS GOING TO JUST NOD MY HEAD AND BE A GOOD LITTLE GIRL, HELP YOU SOOTHE FELIX'S FEELINGS WHILE YOU MADE HIM A MONSTER?
SSSHHHSSS
I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT, AND FELIX ISN'T GOING TO HELP YOU OPEN SOME DOORWAY THAT'LL DESTROY THE WORLD.
TELL HIM! SHOW HIM, FELIX. **DO** SOMETHING! WHATEVER YOU ARE NOW, YOU'RE STILL MY FRIEND. I KNOW YOU WON'T LET THIS...
SPAKK
FELIX?
I UNDERSTAND YOUR FEAR, GIRL, BUT IT'S TOO LATE. IT'S BEGUN. FELIX KNOWS THIS... BY NOW, TRANSFORMED AS HE IS, HE MUST HEAR THE VOICES OF THE OLD GODS.
SURRENDER. YOUR FRIEND WILL BE GONE FROM THIS WORLD SOON. COME AND SOOTHE HIM. BID HIM FAREWELL.

NO!
KRAK
FIGHT, IT FELIX! DON'T GIVE HIM WHAT HE WANTS!
I'LL BE BACK WITH HELP!
MR. CHURCH WILL KNOW HOW TO HELP! HE'S STOPPED GOLNIK BEFORE, AND HE'LL STOP COCTEAU--

WHAT THE--
BOOOOOM
SKRAKKKKK
GGRAHHH
SPLURRCH

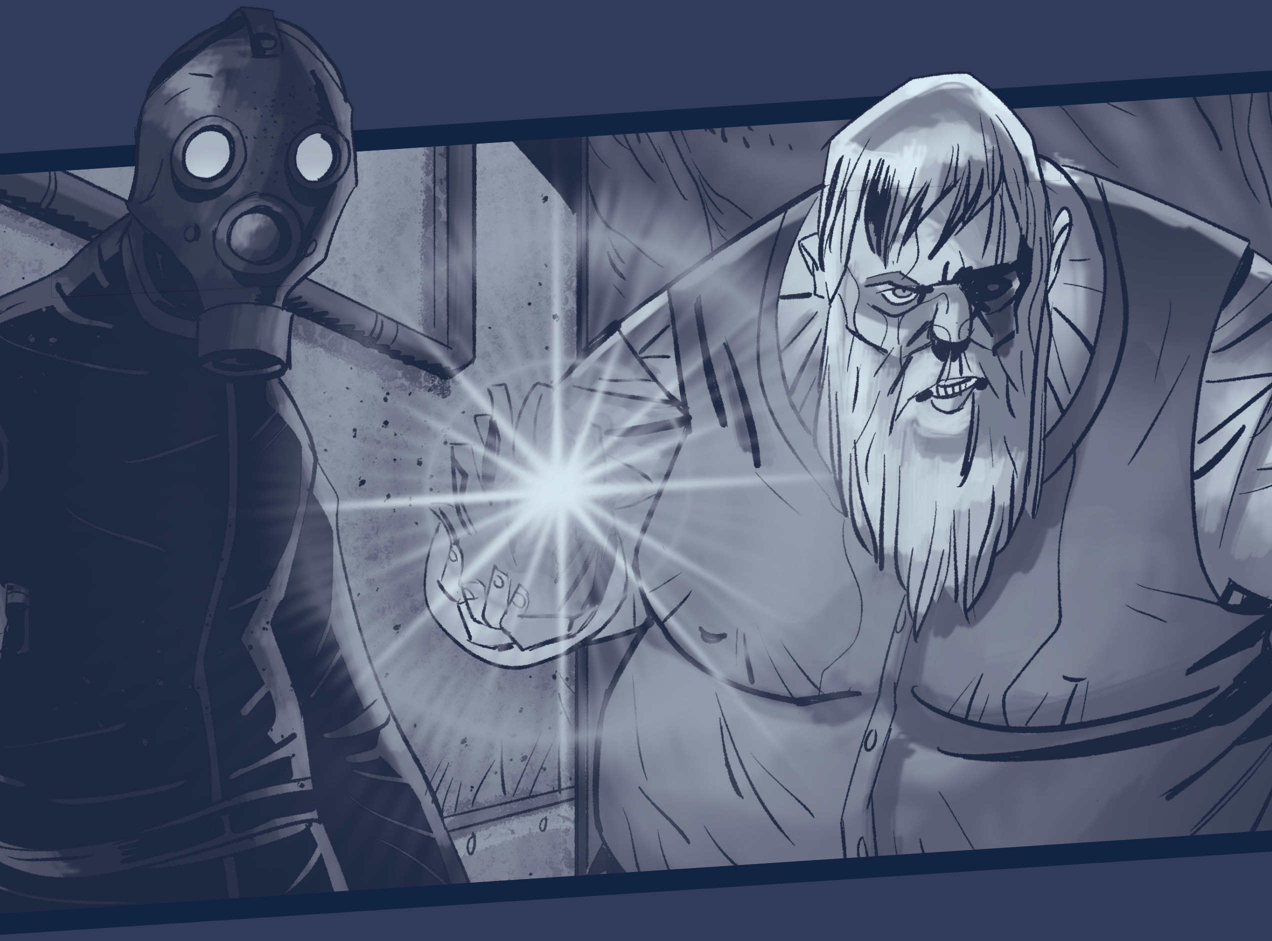

SKRITCHH
I...SMELL... WITCHCRAFT...
SEXTUS? NO...
OH MY GOD. THEY WERE TRUE. ALL OF YOUR DREAMS...
JOE.
CRINA?
WHAT? NO...IT'S ME. IT'S MOLLY.
MOLLY. YES...MOLLY.

DESTROY THE GOLEM. BRING ME THE GIRL.
THE MOMENT IS ALMOST HERE. OUR FRIEND FELIX IS GOING TO DO AS HE'S ASKED, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. HE **WILL** SUCCUMB FULLY TO HIS NATURE...AND HE **WILL** CARRY ME THROUGH.
DESTROY THE MONSTER.
YES. DESTROY.
MR. CHURCH. I HAVE TO...
I'LL BE BACK, JOE. I SWEAR I'LL--


KRUNCHHH
I'LL BE BACK, JOE!
STAY, GIRL. YOU'LL WANT TO BE HERE FOR THE END. FOR FELIX.
YOU CRAZY BASTARD. DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? EVEN IF YOU MAKE IT THROUGH, YOU MAY NOT HAVE A WORLD TO COME **BACK** TO!
I'M NOT **COMING** BACK. I WILL COMMUNE WITH THE OLD GODS AND BE IMBUED WITH THEIR MAJESTY...
YOU'RE RAVING. WHAT DOES THAT EVEN **MEAN?**
YOU REALLY DON'T UNDERSTAND? WHEN I CROSS OVER, THEY WILL MAKE ME ONE OF THEM. I'LL BE THE FIRST HUMAN BEING TO ENTER THE OUTER DARK...
...THE FIRST MAN TO BECOME A **GOD!**

THE CONJURORS

Part
4

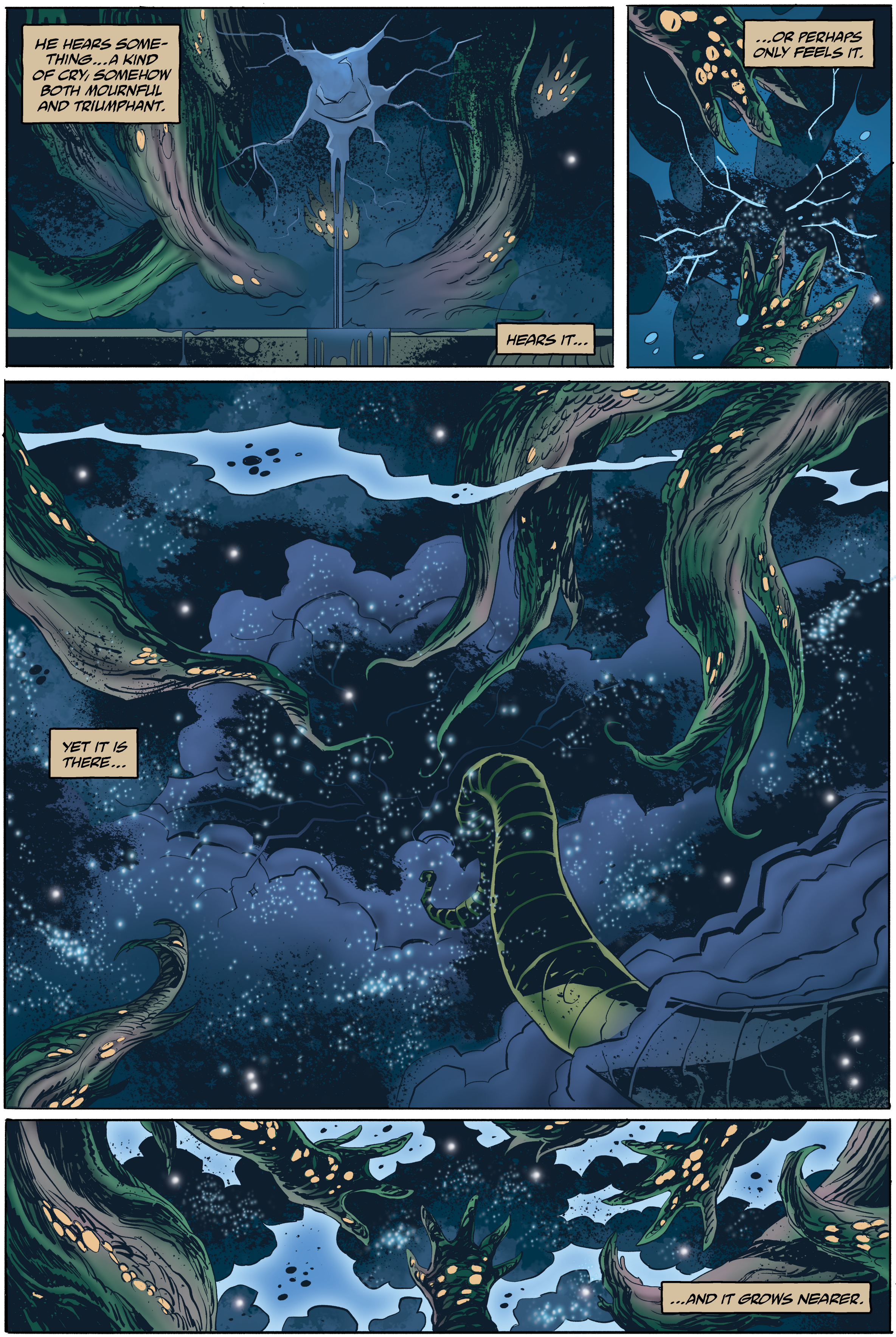


KRUNCH
UNGGGHH!
HHHSSSSS
YOU ARE NOT... WITCHES.
WHAT... ARE YOU?
WE ARE THE NEW HUMAN RACE. THE CHILDREN OF DR. COCTEAU.
THE QUESTION, CREATURE, IS--
THUNKK
--WHAT ARE *YOU?*

NO! LET GO! LET...
KOFFF KOFF
HSSSSSS
NO MORE.
KRRAKK
I KNOW... WHAT I AM.

HHRRNNNN!
SSSSSSS
BLAM
KILL HIM!
HSSSSS
SSHHRRIPPT
GRAGGH

LITTLE FOOL! YOU BELIEVE THAT **THING** HAS COME TO SAVE YOU? ALL IT KNOWS HOW TO DO IS DESTROY.
HHURKK
THWACK
STOP TALKING.
HHNGGHH
...NO... YOU CANNOT TOUCH...


HE HEARS SOME-THING...A KIND OF CRY, SOMEHOW BOTH MOURNFUL AND TRIUMPHANT.
HEARS IT...
...OR PERHAPS ONLY FEELS IT.
YET IT IS THERE...
...AND IT GROWS NEARER.

NO!
WHAT NOW, YOU SON OF A--
OH, NO, GIRL...
HHSSHH
THAT IS NOT FOR YOU.
SWAKK

HE CAN FEEL IT... CALLING TO HIM.
AND YET...
...SOMETHING HOLDS HIM HERE.
ANCHORS HIM.
ANGERS HIM.
KRISSH
CRACKK

CRUNCH
LET GO OF ME!
OH, NO, DEAR GIRL. I'M GOING TO KEEP YOU CLOSE. WHEN I CROSS OVER, I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE THE FIRST TO DIE.
I'M NOT YOUR "DEAR GIRL." I'M **NOBODY'S** DEAR--
WHAT THE HELL?

NO...
RRMMMBLLL
CRINA...
JOSEF
COJACARU
NO!
MOLLY...
ORLOV
RRRUMMMBLLL

GRRAGHHH
SPLUURCHH
KRASHH
GET OUT OF THE WAY!
YEEAAGHH!
KRIKK
KRAK
WHAT IS HE REALLY, MISS MCHUGH? MORE THAN THE LACKEY TO SIMON CHURCH I ALWAYS BELIEVED HIM TO BE, THAT MUCH IS CLEAR. BUT JUST WHAT IN HELL IS HE?
HE'S JOE. SOMEWHERE IN THERE...

SPLURCHH
"...HE'S MY FRIEND."
KRASSHH
FFZZTT
ZZKK
DAMN YOU, GIRL. YOU AND YOUR FRIEND.
FFZZZT
FFZZZT
KRUNCCH
LET. ME. GO!
AAAIIIIEEEE!!

LITTLE WITCH!
WHUMP
LITTLE WITCH!
WHUMP
LITTLE WITCH!
WHUMP
LITTLE WITCH!
WHUMP
KRRRICKKK
RRRMMMBBLL
YOU MAY NOT BE... A WITCH...BUT I CAN SMELL THE MAGIC IN YOU.
SSSSSS. LEAVE ITTTT. WE MUST GO. THE WORLD IS FALLING APART.

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
SKRASSH
AAIIIEEE!!
RRRMMMMBBBLLLL
IDIOT!
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
FELIX!

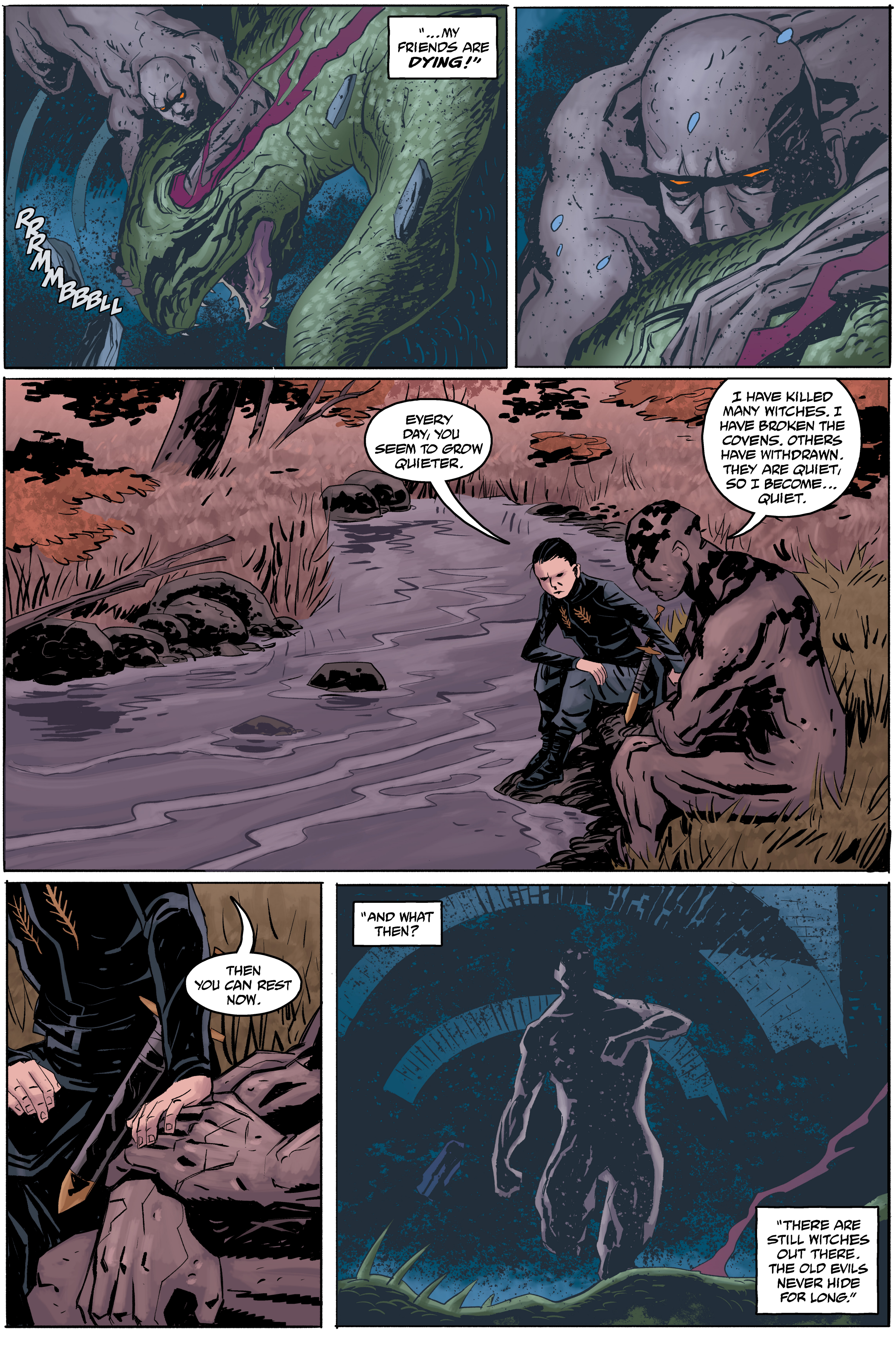
AT LAST, YOU HAVE BECOME YOUR FATHER'S SON!
CALL TO HIM NOW, FELIX. CALL TO YOUR FATHER. SING THE MELODY OF THE OUTER DARK, AND LET ALL BE REVEALED!
AAIIEEE!
SKRITTCH
EEEEEEEEEEEE

POP
POP
KRASSH
SSPUUSSSSH
YES! SING, MY FRIEND! OPEN THE WAY!
RRMMBBLLL
RUN, JOE! WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!
RRMMBLL

RRMMBBLL
JOE! IF YOU CAN HEAR ME--
BOOOOOM
NO, NO, NO, NO, PLEASE!
KLANNGG
THIS ISN'T OVER FOR YOU, CHILD.

RRRRRUUUMMMMMBBBLLL
KRASSSH
RRRMMMMMMBBLL
DR. COCTEAU... PLEASE...I'M AFRAID...
YOU SHOULD BE, DUMMY. WE SHOULD ALL BE TERRIFIED!
BROTHER! HEAR ME...
JOE! OH MY GOD...HE'S STILL DOWN THERE. AND FELIX!
FELIX!

FELIX? IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT! IT WILL...OH, GOD...
WHEN YOU MEET YOUR FATHER, DO NOT FORGET WHAT I HAVE DONE FOR YOU! THE GIFT I HAVE GIVEN!
BASTARD! LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE! THE WHOLE CITY'S TEARING ITSELF APART! PEOPLE ARE DYING! MY FRIENDS...
RRMMBBLL

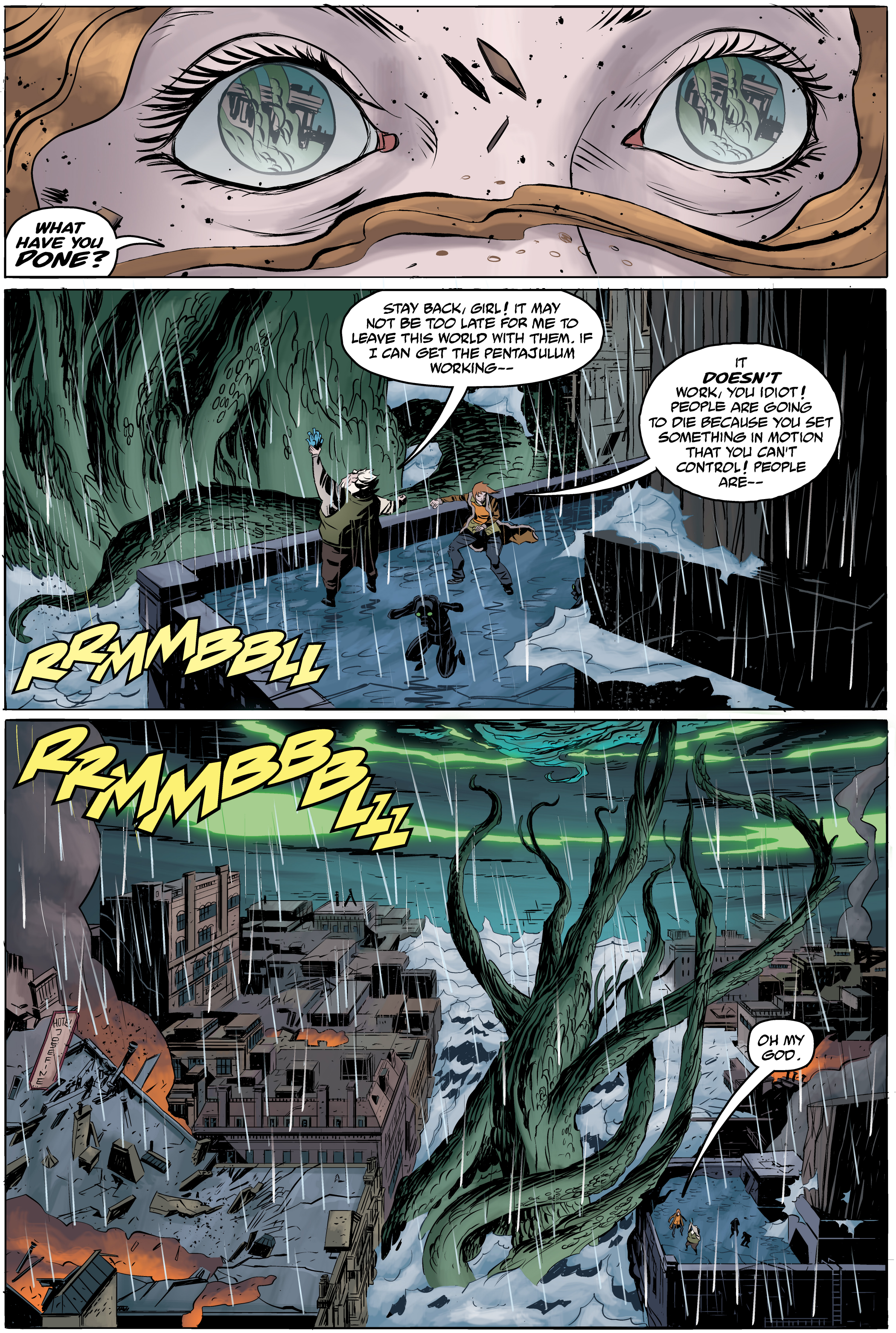

"...MY FRIENDS ARE DYING!"
RRRMMBBBLL
EVERY DAY, YOU SEEM TO GROW QUIETER.
I HAVE KILLED MANY WITCHES. I HAVE BROKEN THE COVENS. OTHERS HAVE WITHDRAWN. THEY ARE QUIET, SO I BECOME... QUIET.
THEN YOU CAN REST NOW.
"AND WHAT THEN?
"THERE ARE STILL WITCHES OUT THERE. THE OLD EVILS NEVER HIDE FOR LONG."

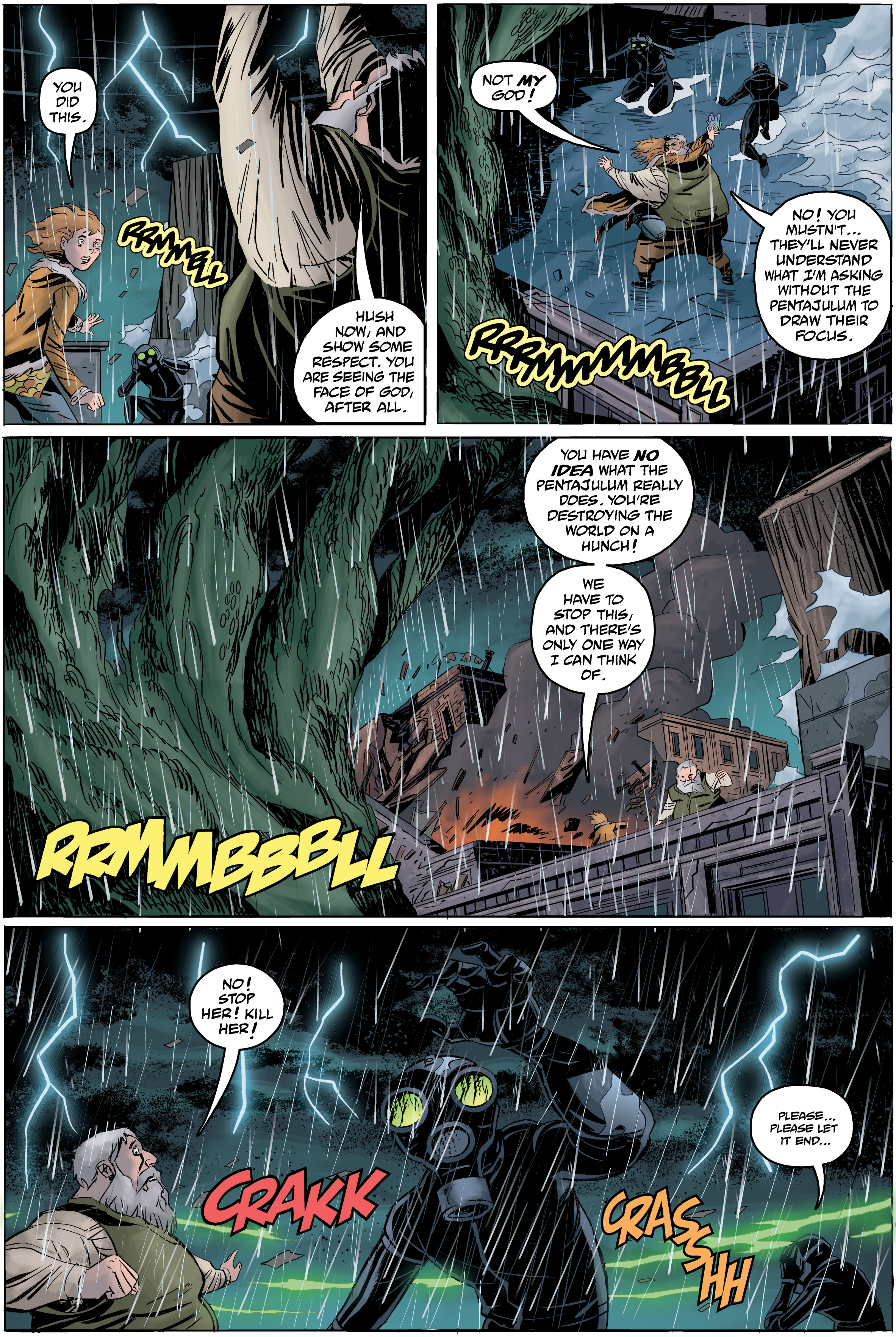
YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH. I WILL HUNT THE WITCHES FOR YOU NOW.
CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR, CRINA. I DON'T KNOW HOW I WAS CHOSEN TO BECOME MORE THAN FATHER GORAN CREATED ME TO BE... BUT I WAS. IT IS NOT A DESTINY TO BE DESIRED.
I WILL FIGHT THE WITCHES ONE DAY.
MAYBE YOU WILL AT THAT.
I STILL WISH YOU HAD A NAME.
SO DO I.
WOULD IT BE ALL RIGHT IF I CALLED YOU "JOSEF"? IT WAS MY GRANDFATHER'S NAME.
I THINK...
"...I THINK I WOULD LIKE THAT VERY MUCH."

STOP THIS! YOU'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO--
EVEN IF I COULD...I WOULD NEVER DISRUPT SOMETHING SO BEAUTIFUL.
HHEEEIIGGH
HHEEEIIGGH
RRRMMMBBLL
I SPEAK NOW TO THE POWERS WHO WAIT BEYOND THE CURTAIN OF THIS WORLD...

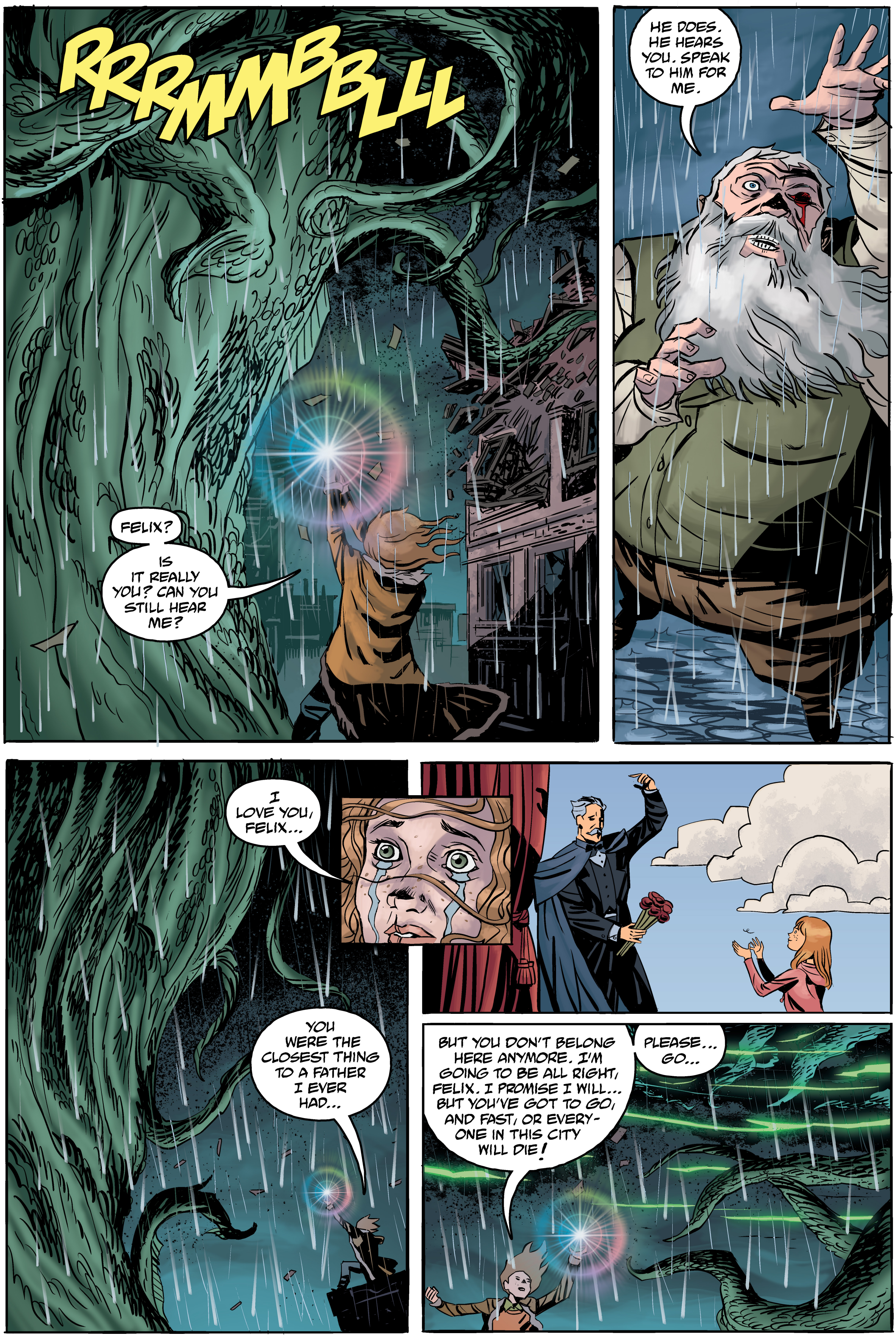
HHHEEEIIEEE
TO THEM I WILL SURRENDER THIS LIFE. THESE LIVES...
HHHEEII
RRRRMMBBLL

THE
CONJURORS
Part
5
D.PALUMBO


WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
STAY BACK, GIRL! IT MAY NOT BE TOO LATE FOR ME TO LEAVE THIS WORLD WITH THEM. IF I CAN GET THE PENTAJULUM WORKING--
IT DOESN'T WORK, YOU IDIOT! PEOPLE ARE GOING TO DIE BECAUSE YOU SET SOMETHING IN MOTION THAT YOU CAN'T CONTROL! PEOPLE ARE--
RRMMBBLL
RRMMBBBLLL
OH MY GOD.


YOU DID THIS.
RRMMBLL
HUSH NOW, AND SHOW SOME RESPECT. YOU ARE SEEING THE FACE OF GOD, AFTER ALL.
NOT MY GOD!
NO! YOU MUSTN'T... THEY'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M ASKING WITHOUT THE PENTAJULUM TO DRAW THEIR FOCUS.
RRRMMMMBBLL
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE PENTAJULUM REALLY DOES. YOU'RE DESTROYING THE WORLD ON A HUNCH!
WE HAVE TO STOP THIS, AND THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY I CAN THINK OF.
RRMMBBBLL
NO! STOP HER! KILL HER!
CRAKK
CRASSHH
PLEASE... PLEASE LET IT END...

RRRMMBBLL
I WON'T ALLOW A CHILD TO KEEP ME FROM EXPLORING MYSTERIES I'VE PURSUED MY ENTIRE LIFE!
DO I LOOK LIKE A GIRL WHO GIVES A DAMN WHAT YOU'LL ALLOW?
PLEASE, BROTHER. DON'T LEAVE ME HERE ALONE.
I SWEAR IT. WHATEVER HAPPENS NOW...
"...AT LEAST WE WILL BE TOGETHER."
HOLY...
NO...YOU CAN'T...

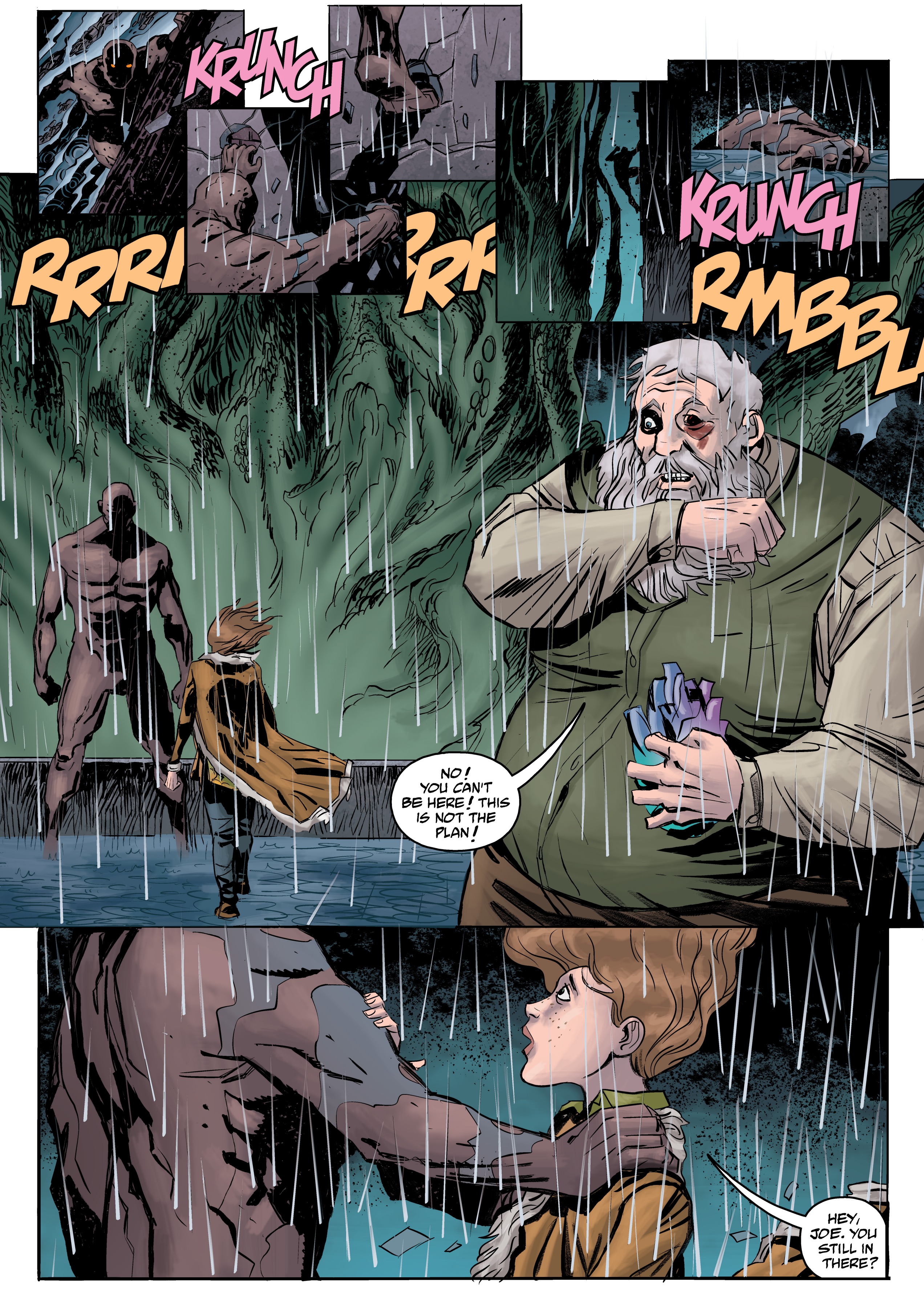

RRRMMBBLLL
FELIX?
IS IT REALLY YOU? CAN YOU STILL HEAR ME?
HE DOES. HE HEARS YOU. SPEAK TO HIM FOR ME.
I LOVE YOU, FELIX...
YOU WERE THE CLOSEST THING TO A FATHER I EVER HAD...
BUT YOU DON'T BELONG HERE ANYMORE. I'M GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT, FELIX. I PROMISE I WILL... BUT YOU'VE GOT TO GO, AND FAST, OR EVERY-ONE IN THIS CITY WILL DIE!
PLEASE... GO...

YOU FOOL! GIVE IT TO ME!
UNNFFF
RRMMMMBBLL
FELIX!
RRMMMBBL
CRASSH

CLINKK
RRRMMBBLL
ANU, NADO MNOU KRÁĽ NEBIES. ENKI, PODO MNOU, KRÁĽ. MARDUKOVA KRV JE VO MNE. NIE JE TO JA, ALE MARDUK, KTO VYKONÁVA ZAKLÍNADLO...
RRMMBBBLL
NO... PLEASE DON'T GO...YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME! TAKE ME WITH YOU!
LET HIM GO. YOU'RE NOT MEANT TO SEE WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE.
DAMN YOU! HOW DID YOU MAKE IT WORK?
I DON'T KNOW! I SWEAR I--
TELL ME!
RMMBBLL
KRAKK

RRRMMBBBLL
BROTHER...
I KNOW.
I SWEAR TO YOU, GIRL, IF YOU DON'T...
RRMBBL
WHAT IS IT? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?
RRRMMBBLL
"WHAT ARE YOU...OH...
"OH, NO."

KRUNGH
JOE.
HOW CAN HE **BE** HERE? HOW IS IT STILL ***ALIVE?***
RRRMMMMMBLL
KRAKKKK
ANU, NADO MNOU KRĀĪ'NEBIES... NO...TELL ME, MOLLY! TELL ME HOW YOU DID IT!
TO HELL WITH YOU.

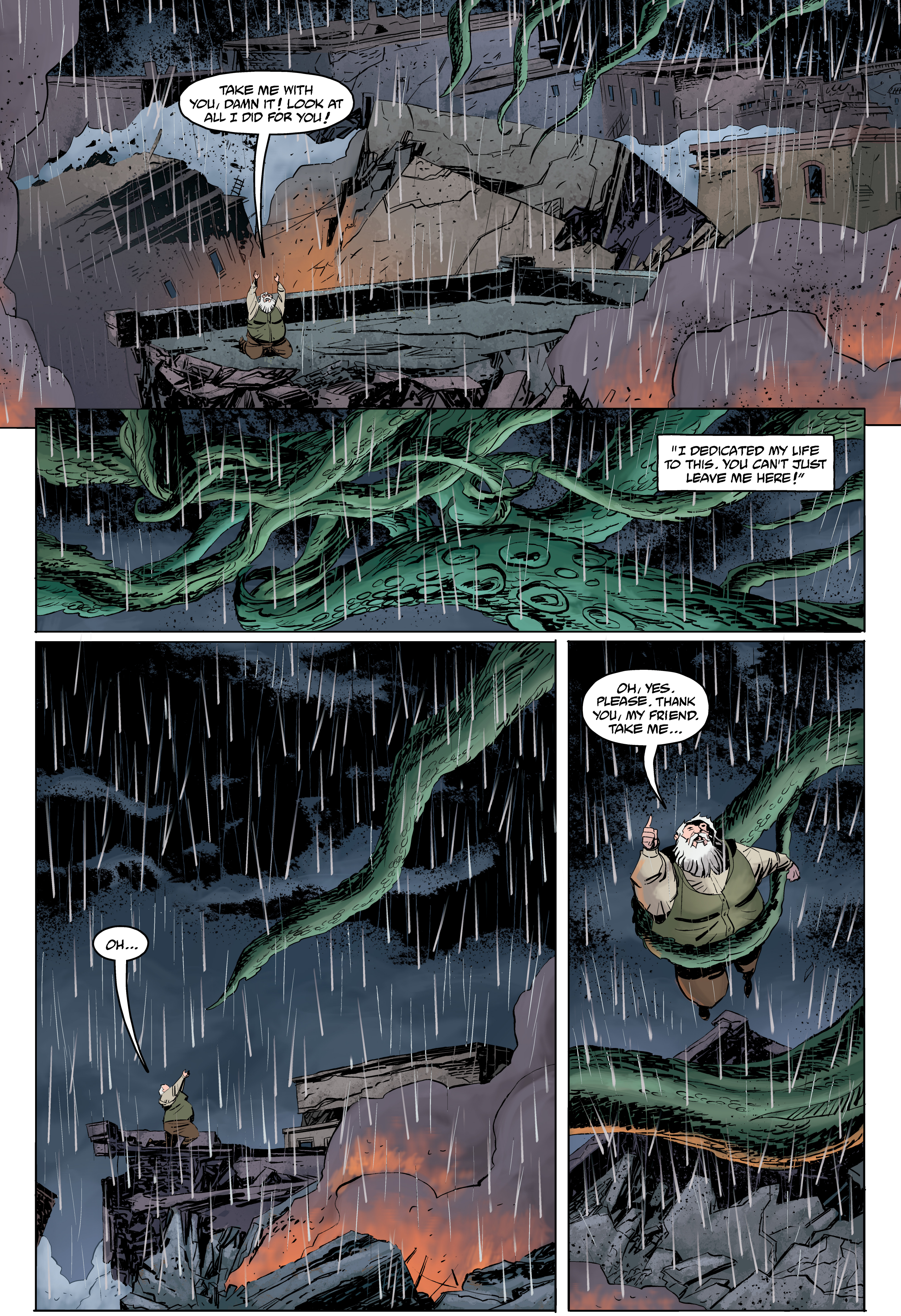

KRUNCH
RRRI
RR
KRUNCH
RMBBL
NO! YOU CAN'T BE HERE! THIS IS NOT THE PLAN!
HEY, JOE. YOU STILL IN THERE?

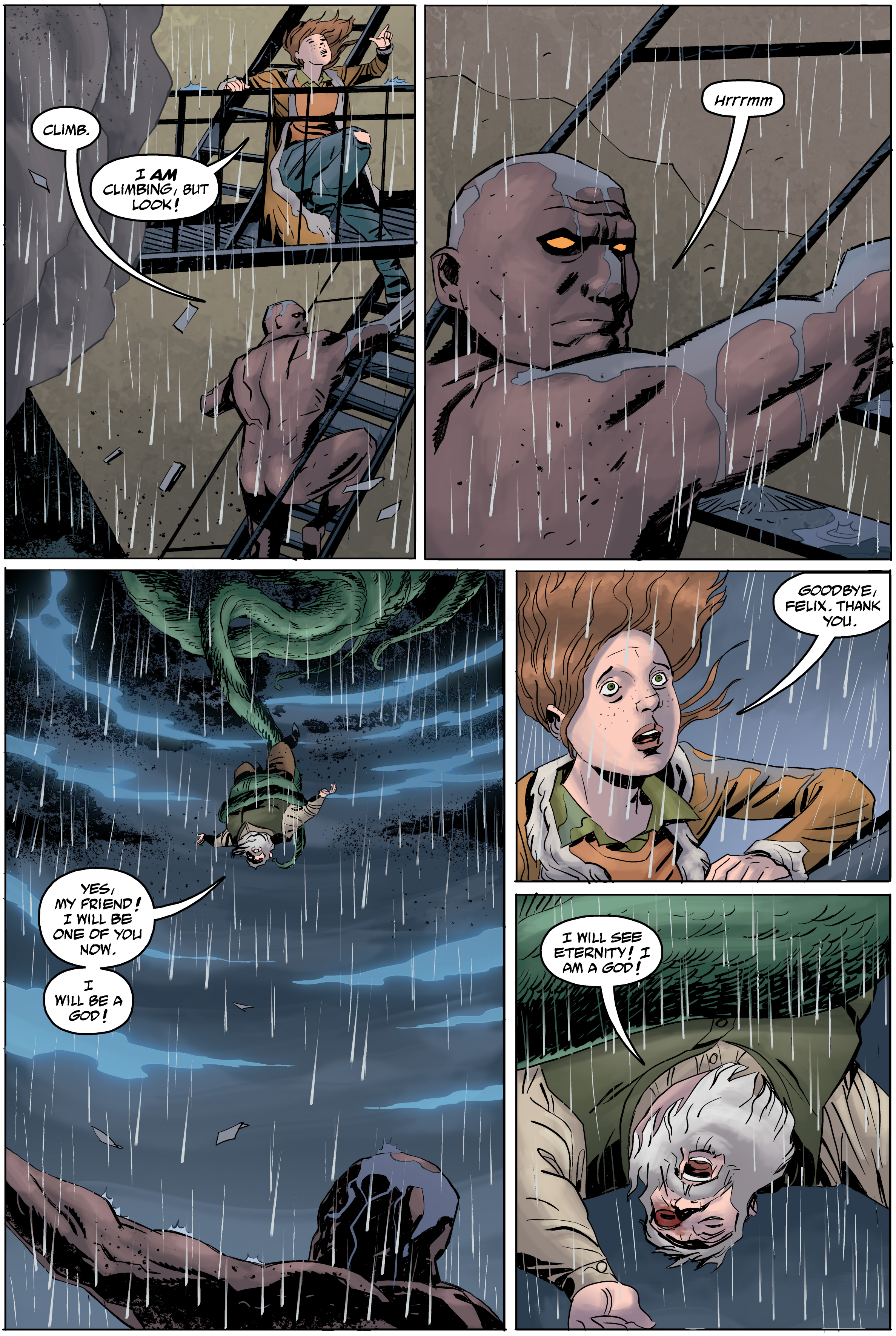
FELIX ORLOV, MY FRIEND. LISTEN, I BEG YOU. I'VE RELEASED YOU FROM YOUR HUMAN PRISON. HELP ME NOW, PLEASE. I MUST SEE WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE.
I ONLY WANT TO STEP THROUGH, TO SEE THE OUTER DARK WITH MY OWN EYES. PLEASE...
...TAKE ME WITH YOU.
RRRMMMMMMBBLL
NO! IT WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE MINE!
HHHHHHHHMMMMMMMMMMM

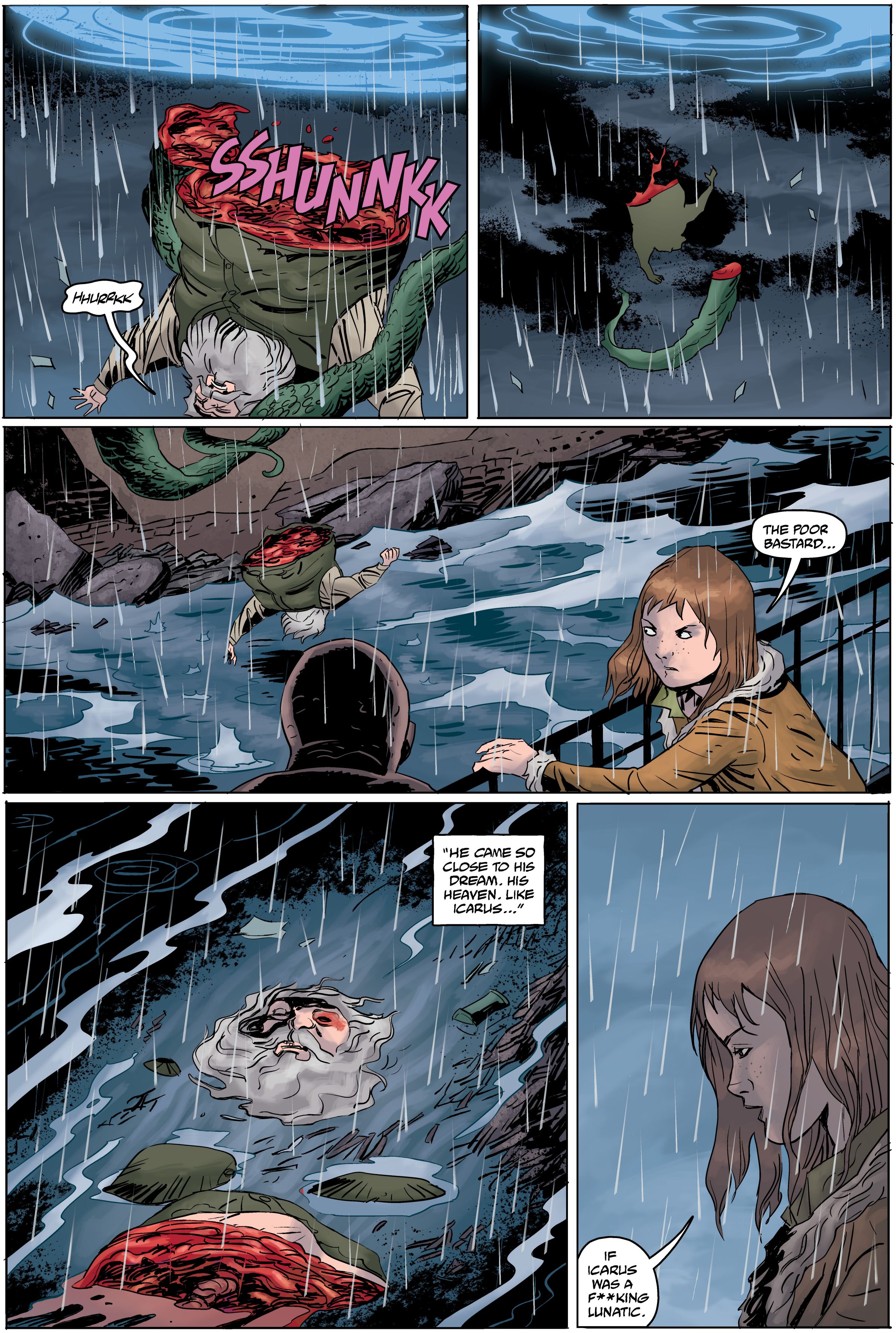
RRRMMMBBBLLL
KRAAKK
IT'S WORKING. WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING...
HELP ME, PLEASE. SPEAK TO THEM ON MY BEHALF. ASK THEM...
SSSSSSSSHHHHHHHH

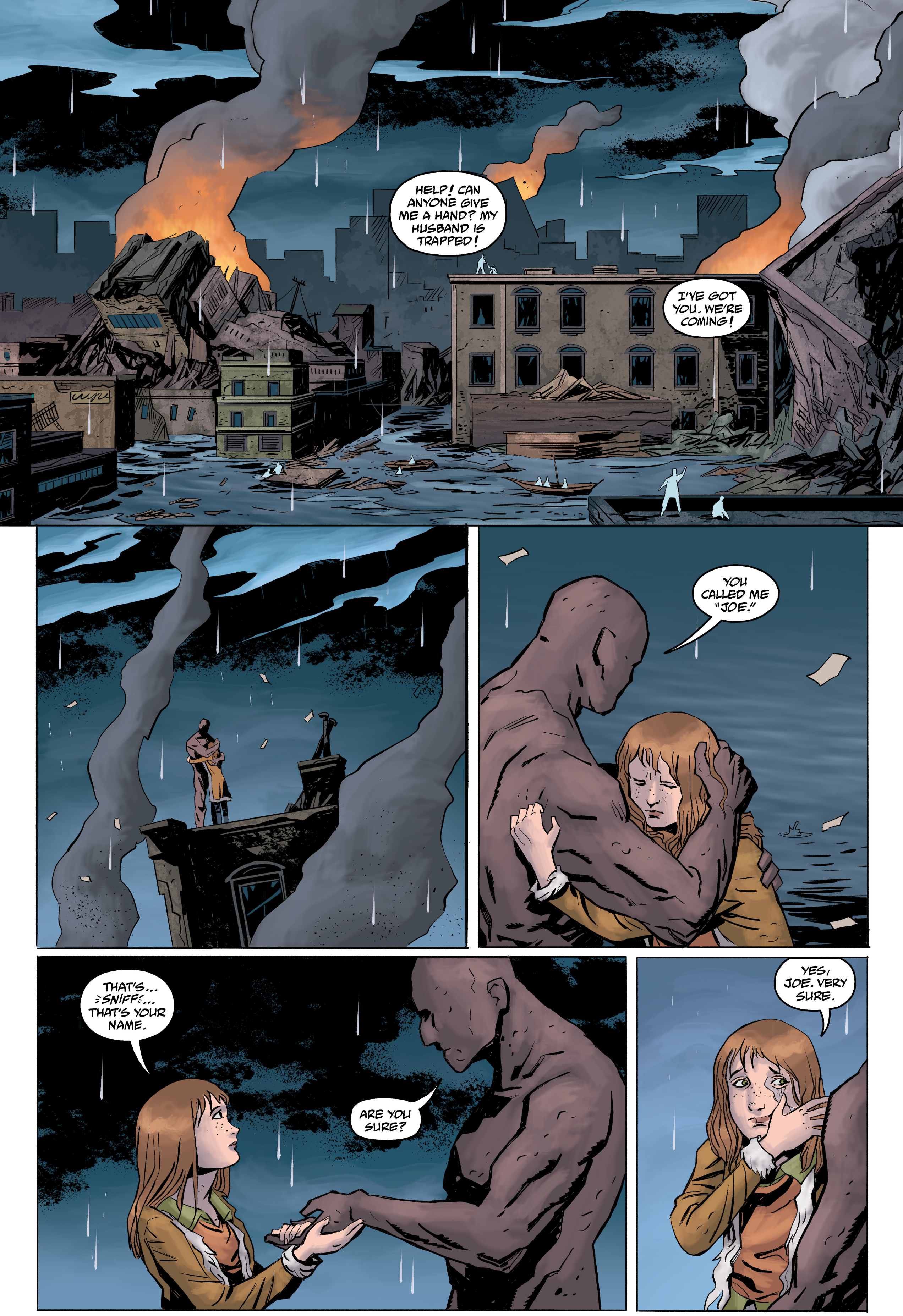
KRUNNCHH
NOOO!!
SSSSSSFTTT
OH, NO. NO, NO, NO. WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
KRAAKOOOM

THERE! HURRY!
KRRMMM
UNNFFFHH!
OOOOOFF!
KLANGG
KRUNNCH


TAKE ME WITH YOU, DAMN IT! LOOK AT ALL I DID FOR YOU!
"I DEDICATED MY LIFE TO THIS. YOU CAN'T JUST LEAVE ME HERE!"
OH...
OH, YES. PLEASE. THANK YOU, MY FRIEND. TAKE ME...

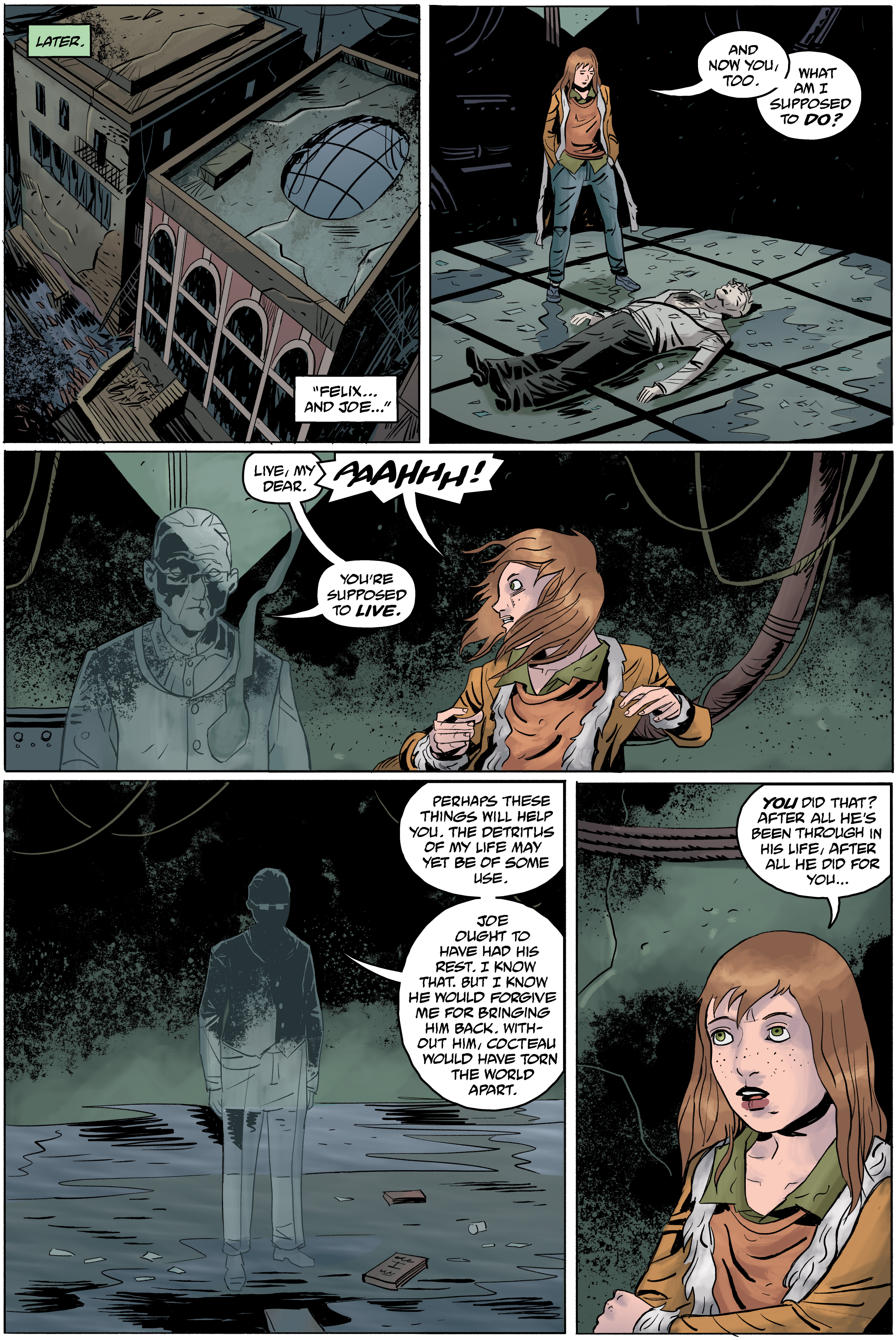

CLIMB.
I AM CLIMBING, BUT LOOK!
Hrrrmm
YES, MY FRIEND! I WILL BE ONE OF YOU NOW.
I WILL BE A GOD!
GOODBYE, FELIX. THANK YOU.
I WILL SEE ETERNITY! I AM A GOD!

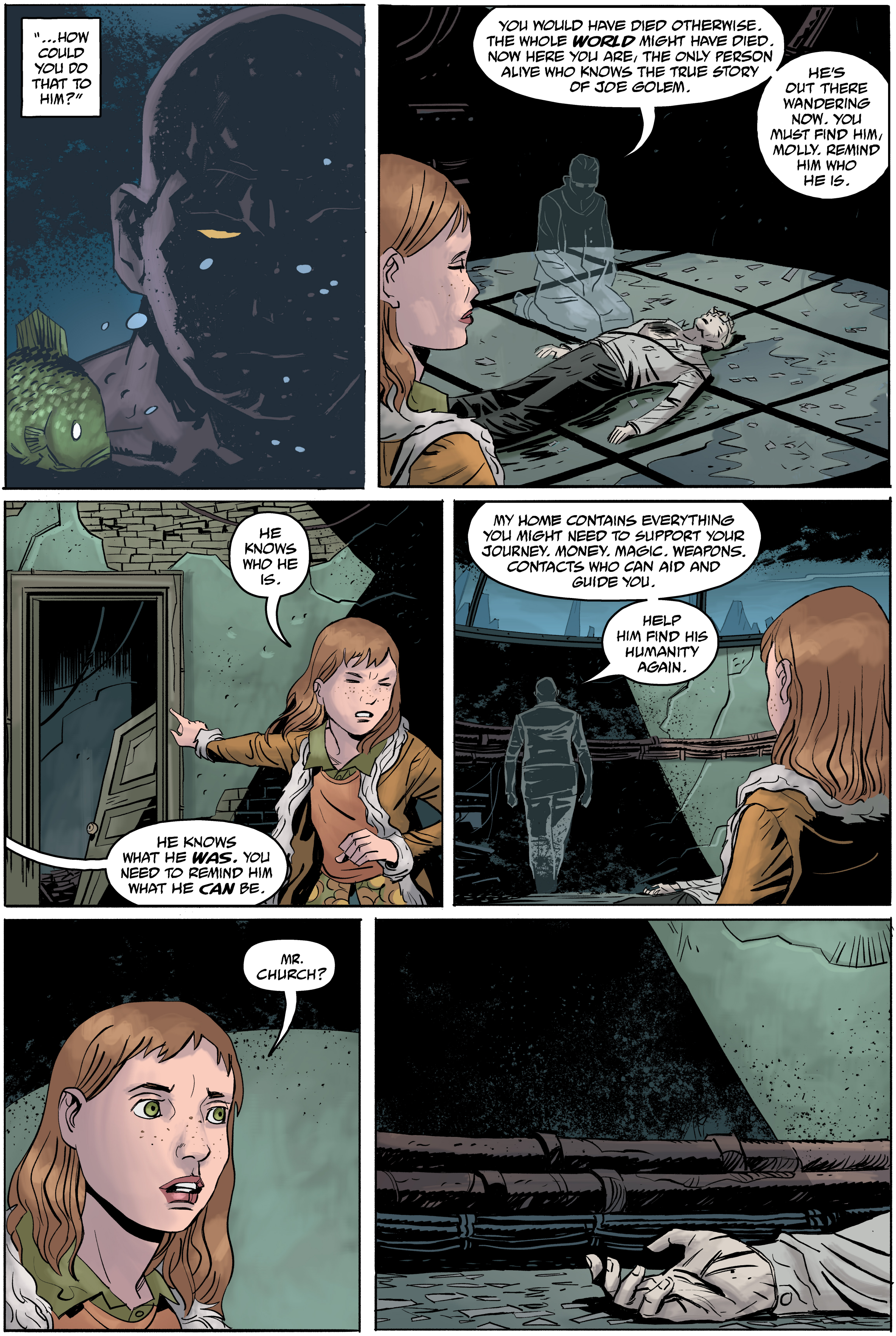

SSHUNNKK
HHURRKK
THE POOR BASTARD...
"HE CAME SO CLOSE TO HIS DREAM. HIS HEAVEN. LIKE ICARUS..."
IF ICARUS WAS A F**KING LUNATIC.

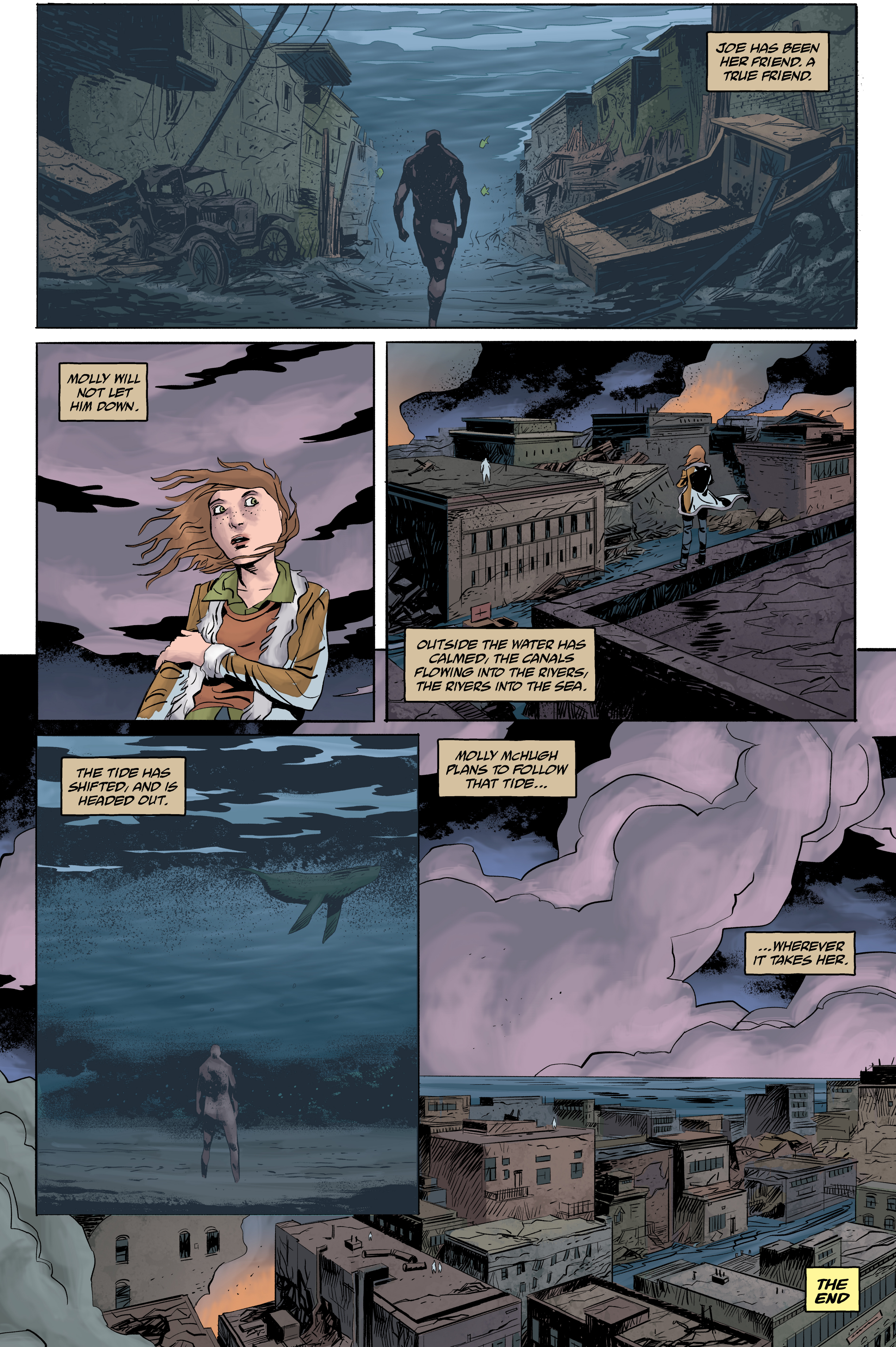

HELP! CAN ANYONE GIVE ME A HAND? MY HUSBAND IS TRAPPED!
I'VE GOT YOU. WE'RE COMING!
YOU CALLED ME "JOE."
THAT'S... *SNIFF*... THAT'S YOUR NAME.
ARE YOU SURE?
YES, JOE. VERY SURE.

THANK YOU.
I'LL TRY NOT TO FORGET.
JOE, WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO HUNT WITCHES.
SKRITCH

SHERID


LATER.
"FELIX... AND JOE..."
AND NOW YOU, TOO.
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
LIVE, MY DEAR.
AAAHHH!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LIVE.
PERHAPS THESE THINGS WILL HELP YOU. THE DETRITUS OF MY LIFE MAY YET BE OF SOME USE.
JOE OUGHT TO HAVE HAD HIS REST. I KNOW THAT. BUT I KNOW HE WOULD FORGIVE ME FOR BRINGING HIM BACK. WITHOUT HIM, COCTEAU WOULD HAVE TORN THE WORLD APART.
YOU DID THAT? AFTER ALL HE'S BEEN THROUGH IN HIS LIFE, AFTER ALL HE DID FOR YOU...


"...HOW COULD YOU DO THAT TO HIM?"
YOU WOULD HAVE DIED OTHERWISE. THE WHOLE WORLD MIGHT HAVE DIED. NOW HERE YOU ARE, THE ONLY PERSON ALIVE WHO KNOWS THE TRUE STORY OF JOE GOLEM.
HE'S OUT THERE WANDERING NOW. YOU MUST FIND HIM, MOLLY. REMIND HIM WHO HE IS.
HE KNOWS WHO HE IS.
HE KNOWS WHAT HE WAS. YOU NEED TO REMIND HIM WHAT HE CAN BE.
MY HOME CONTAINS EVERYTHING YOU MIGHT NEED TO SUPPORT YOUR JOURNEY. MONEY. MAGIC. WEAPONS. CONTACTS WHO CAN AID AND GUIDE YOU.
HELP HIM FIND HIS HUMANITY AGAIN.
MR. CHURCH?


JOE HAS BEEN HER FRIEND. A TRUE FRIEND.
MOLLY WILL NOT LET HIM DOWN.
OUTSIDE THE WATER HAS CALMED; THE CANALS FLOWING INTO THE RIVERS; THE RIVERS INTO THE SEA.
THE TIDE HAS SHIFTED, AND IS HEADED OUT.
MOLLY McHUGH PLANS TO FOLLOW THAT TIDE...
...WHEREVER IT TAKES HER.
THE END

JOE GOLEM™ OCCULT DETECTIVE

SKETCHBOOK

Notes by Peter Bergting

I'm a terrible sketcher. I keep buying expensive Moleskine books in the hopes of filling them with Instagram-friendly drawings. But anyone who as ever had the misfortune of dropping by my feed knows that never happens. My "best" sketches usually appear when I have nothing better to do and some loose pages from the printer lying around.

It will never happen, but I would love to do an entire issue like this. I have a background in children's books illustrations, and whenever I doodle just for fun, this is where I end up.

The scenes with Joe walking through the subway tunnels are easily my favorite pages of all time that I've drawn. I don't love all of them, but there are some panels where I really feel like I knew what I was doing.

Joe went through a final transformation over the course of the last issues, becoming more and more golem. It was tough to find that balance. It was too easy to just rip all of that flesh off.

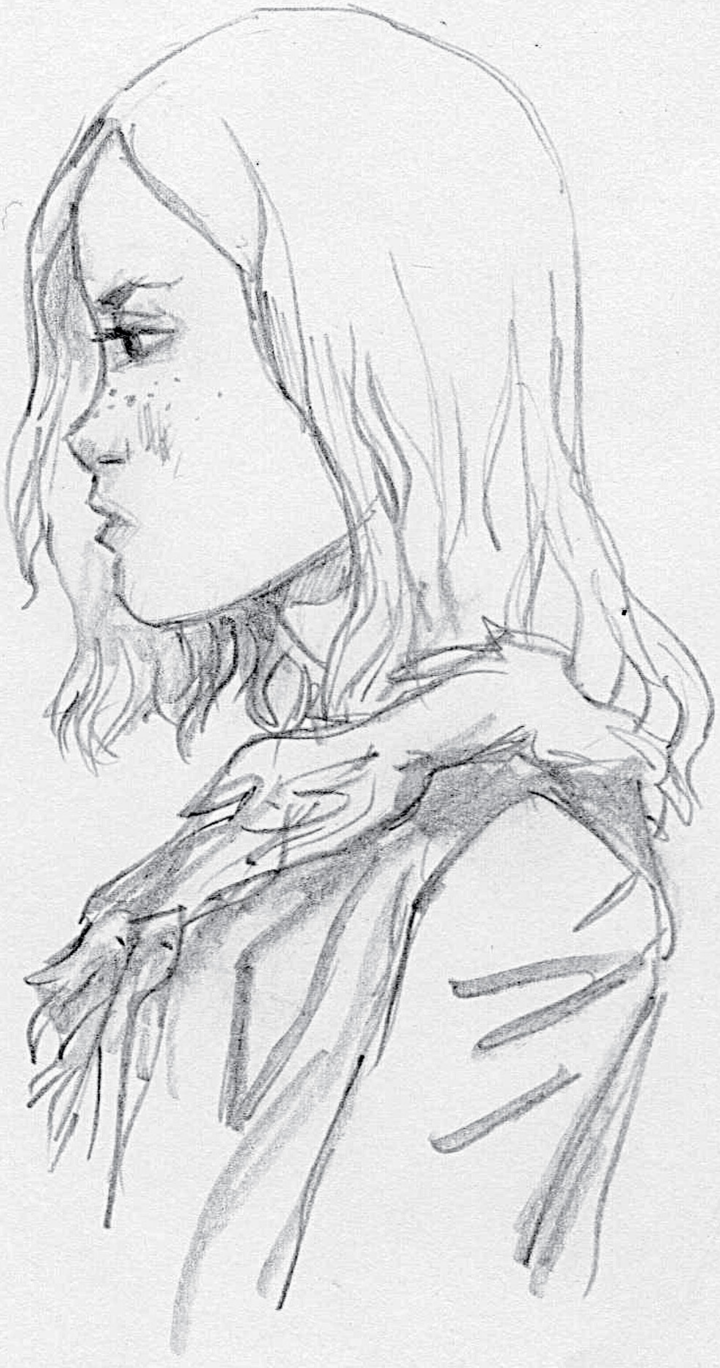
I kept revisiting the script when drawing, and there were moments where I feel I should have scaled back in earlier issues. Scenes where there was still some "Joe" left but I had already veered off too much. The trick then was to bring humanity to the golem instead of the other way around.

I love drawing Joe in a trench coat. He's such an iconic character. I still don't think I ever nailed the design. There are moments where I think I "got" him, but he's such a complex character that I found it hard to do him justice. Perhaps that's a good thing. I keep wanting to improve.

One of those giant eels. They looked more "eely" in the novel but I really just gave it my own spin.

One of the more challenging things to draw this time around was the Felix monster destroying the city. It had to be a fairly accurate recreation of a 1920's New York, half submerged, but upgraded over the years to look believably like the 70s. I purchased books with photos of old New York, especially postcards of Manhattan and the lower east side, to hopefully get some of the feeling across. And then that monster ripping it apart. Felix had to be recognizable from the novel, but there weren't that many pictures of "him" to draw inspiration from.

These two were just warm-up sketches to see what collapsing buildings would look like with all that action going on. The real challenge was keeping track of the two giant eels, Cocteau, Joe, two frog men, Molly, and then Felix and his "dad" coming to get him from that void up in the sky.



Molly was such a fun character to draw. From Sofia in the *Baltimore* books to Molly in *Joe Golem*, I feel privileged to have been allowed to draw them.

MIKE MIGNOLA's fascination with ghosts and monsters began at an early age; reading *Dracula* at age twelve introduced him to Victorian literature and folklore, from which he has never recovered. Starting in 1982 as a bad inker for Marvel Comics, he swiftly evolved into a not-so-bad artist. By the late 1980s, he had begun to develop his own unique graphic style, with mainstream projects like *Cosmic Odyssey* and *Batman: Gotham by Gaslight*. In 1994, he published the first *Hellboy* series through Dark Horse. There are over fifteen *Hellboy* graphic novels, several spinoff titles (*B.P.R.D.*, *Lobster Johnson*, *Abe Sapien*, *Sir Edward Grey: Witchfinder,* and more), prose books, animated films, and three live-action films. Along the way he worked on Francis Ford Coppola's film *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), Disney's *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001), and with director Guillermo del Toro on *Blade II* (2002), *Hellboy* (2004), and *Hellboy II: The Golden Army* (2008). A new film by Neil Marshall was released in 2019. Mike's books have earned numerous awards and are published in a great many countries. He lives somewhere in Southern California with his wife, daughter, and cat.

CHRISTOPHER GOLDEN is the *New York Times* bestselling, Bram Stoker Award-winning author of *Ararat*, *The Pandora Room*, *Snowblind*, and many other novels. With Mike Mignola, he co-created the Dark Horse Comics series *Baltimore* and *Joe Golem: Occult Detective*. As editor, Golden has produced numerous anthologies, including *The New Dead*, *Seize the Night*, and *Hark! The Herald Angels Scream*. He has also written screenplays, video games, radio plays, and an online animated series. A frequent lecturer and keynote speaker, Golden co-hosts the podcasts "Three Guys with Beards" and "Defenders Dialogue," and he founded the Merrimack Valley Halloween Book Festival. He lives in Massachusetts with his family and too many books. Please visit him at www.christophergolden.com

PETER BERGTING has spent all of his life drawing silly and scary things and made his comic book debut with the 2006 series *The Portent*. He loves working on his slice of the Mignolaverse and plops down in front of the drawing board with a big, cheesy grin every day.

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